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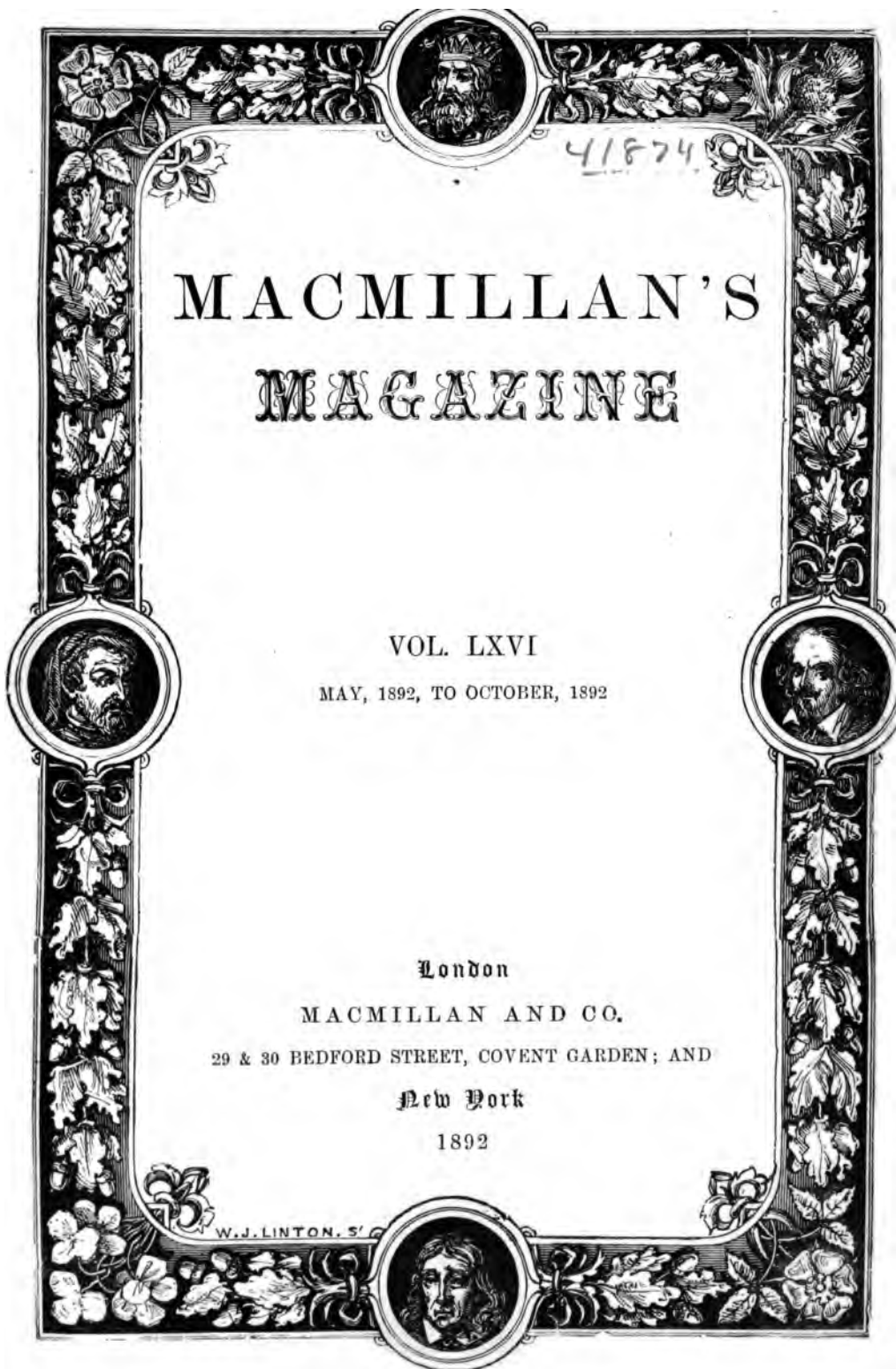
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MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE

VOL. LXVI



MACMILLAN'S
MAGAZINE

VOL. LXVI

MAY, 1892, TO OCTOBER, 1892

London

MACMILLAN AND CO.

29 & 30 BEDFORD STREET, COVENT GARDEN; AND

New York

1892

W.J. LINTON. S.

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MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

MAY, 1892.

DON ORSINO.¹

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD.

CHAPTER XI.

DEL FERICE was surprised beyond measure at Orsino's request, and was not guilty of any profoundly nefarious intention when he so readily acceded to it. His own character made him choose as a rule to refuse nothing that was asked of him, though his promises were not always fulfilled afterwards. To express his own willingness to help those who asked was obviously not the same as asserting his power to give assistance when the time should come. In the present case he did not even make up his mind which of two courses he would ultimately pursue. Orsino came to him with a small sum of ready money in his hand. Del Ferice had it in his power to make him lose that sum, and a great deal more besides, thereby causing the boy endless trouble with his family; or else the banker could, if he pleased, help him to a very considerable success. His really superior talent for diplomacy inclined him to choose the latter plan, but he was far too cautious to make any hasty decision.

The brougham rolled on through quiet and ill-lighted streets, and Del Ferice leaned back in his corner, not listening at all to Orsino's talk, though he occasionally uttered a polite though utterly unintelligible syllable or two

which might mean anything agreeable to his companion's views. The situation was easy enough to understand, and he had grasped it in a moment. What Orsino might say was of no importance whatever, but the consequences of any action on Del Ferice's part might be serious and lasting.

Orsino stated his many reasons for wishing to engage in business, as he had stated them more than once already during the day and during the past weeks, and when he had finished he repeated his first question.

"Can you help me to try my luck?" he asked.

Del Ferice awoke from his reverie with characteristic readiness, and realised that he must say something. His voice had never been strong, and he leaned out of his corner of the carriage in order to speak near Orsino's ear.

"I am delighted with all you say," he began, "and I scarcely need repeat that my services are altogether at your disposal. The only question is, how are we to begin? The sum you mention is certainly not large, but that does not matter. You would have little difficulty in raising as many hundreds of thousands as you have thousands, if money were necessary. But in business of this kind the only ready money needed is for stamp-duty and for the wages of

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workmen, and the banks advance what is necessary for the latter purpose in small sums on notes of hand guaranteed by a general mortgage. When you have paid the stamp-duties, you may go to the club and lose the balance of your capital at baccarat if you please. The loss in that direction will not affect your credit as a contractor. All that is very simple. You wish to succeed, however, not at cards, but at business. That is the difficulty."

Del Ferice paused.

"That is not very clear to me," observed Orsino.

"No,—no," answered Del Ferice thoughtfully. "No,—I dare say it is not so very clear. I wish I could make it clearer. Speculation means gambling only when the speculator is a gambler. Of course there are successful gamblers in the world, but there are not many of them. I read somewhere the other day that business was the art of handling other people's money. The remark is not particularly true. Business is the art of creating a value where none has yet existed. That is what you wish to do. I do not think that a Saracinesca would take pleasure in turning over money not belonging to him."

"Certainly not!" exclaimed Orsino. "That is usury."

"Not exactly, but it is banking; and banking, it is quite true, is usury within legal bounds. There is no question of that here. The operation is simple in the extreme. I sell you a piece of land on the understanding that you will build upon it, and instead of payment you give me a mortgage. I lend you money from month to month in small sums at a small interest, to pay for material and labour. You are only responsible upon one point; the money is to be used for the purpose stated. When the building is finished you sell it. If you sell it for cash, you pay off the mortgage and receive the difference. If you sell it with the mortgage, the buyer becomes the mortgager and only pays

you the difference which remains yours out and out. That is the whole process from beginning to end."

"How wonderfully simple!"

"It is almost primitive in its simplicity," answered Del Ferice gravely. "But in every case two difficulties present themselves, and I am bound to tell you that they are serious ones."

"What are they?"

"You must know how to buy in the right part of the city, and you must have a competent assistant. The two conditions are indispensable."

"What sort of an assistant?" asked Orsino.

"A practical man. If possible, an architect, who will then have a share of the profits instead of being paid for his work."

"Is it very hard to find such a person?"

"It is not easy."

"Do you think you could help me?"

"I do not know. I am assuming a great responsibility in doing so. You do not seem to realise that, Don Orsino."

Del Ferice laughed a little in his quiet way, but Orsino was silent. It was the first time that the banker had reminded him of the vast difference in their social and political positions.

"I do not think it would be very wise of me to help you into such a business as this," said Del Ferice cautiously. "I speak quite selfishly and for my own sake. Success is never certain, and it would be a great injury to me if you failed."

He was beginning to make up his mind.

"Why?" asked Orsino. His own instincts of generosity were aroused. He would certainly not do Del Ferice an injury if he could help it, nor allow him to incur the risk of one.

"If you fail," answered the other, "all Rome will say that I have intentionally brought about your failure. You know how people talk. Thousands will become millions, and I shall be

accused of having plotted the destruction of your family, because your father once wounded me in a duel nearly five and twenty years ago."

"How absurd!"

"No, no,—it is not absurd. I am afraid I have the reputation of being vindictive. Well, well,—it is in bad taste to talk of one's self. I am good at hating, perhaps, but I have always felt that I preferred peace to war, and now I am growing old. I am not what I once was, Don Orsino, and I do not like quarrelling. But I would not allow people to say impertinent things about me, and if you failed and lost money I should be abused by your friends and perhaps censured by my own. Do you see? Yes, I am selfish; I admit it. You must forgive that weakness in me. I like peace."

"It is very natural," said Orsino, "and I have no right to put you in danger of the slightest inconvenience. But, after all, why need I appear before the public?"

Del Ferice smiled in the dark. "True," he answered. "You could establish an anonymous firm, so to say, and the documents would be a secret between you and me and the notary. Of course there are many ways of managing such an affair quietly."

He did not add that the secret could only be kept so long as Orsino was successful. It seemed a pity to damp so much good enthusiasm.

"We will do that, then, if you will show me how. My ambition is not to see my name on a door-plate, but to be really occupied."

"I understand, I understand," said Del Ferice thoughtfully. "I must ask you to give me until to-morrow to consider the matter. It needs a little thought."

"Where can I find you, to hear your decision?"

Del Ferice was silent for a moment. "I think I once met you late in the afternoon at Madame d'Aranjuez's. We might manage to meet there to-morrow and come away together.

Shall we name an hour? Would it suit you?"

"Perfectly," answered Orsino with alacrity.

The idea of meeting Maria Consuelo alone was very disturbing in his present state of mind. He felt that he had lost his balance in his relations with her, and that in order to regain it he must see her in the presence of a third person, if only for a quarter of an hour. It would be easier, then, to resume the former intercourse and to say whatever he should determine upon saying. If she were offended she would at least not show it in any marked way before Del Ferice. Orsino's existence, he thought, was becoming complicated for the first time, and though he enjoyed the vague sensation of impending difficulty, he wanted as many opportunities as possible of reviewing the situation and of meditating upon each new move.

He got out of Del Ferice's carriage at no great distance from his own home, and after a few words of very sincere thanks walked slowly away. He found it very hard to arrange his thoughts in any consecutive order, though he tried several methods of self-analysis, and repeated to himself that he had experienced a great happiness and was probably on the threshold of a great success. These two reflections did not help him much. The happiness had been of the explosive kind, and the success in the business-matter was more than problematic, as well as certainly distant in the future.

He was very restless and craved the immediate excitement of further emotions, so that he would certainly have gone to the club that night, had not the fear of losing his small and precious capital deterred him. He thought of all that was coming and he determined to be careful, even sordid if necessary, rather than lose his chance of making the great attempt. Besides, he would cut a poor figure on the morrow if he were obliged to admit to Del Ferice that he had lost

his fifteen thousand francs and was momentarily penniless. He accordingly shut himself up in his own room at an early hour, and smoked in solitude until he was sleepy, reviewing the various events of the day, or trying to do so, though his mind reverted constantly to the one chief event of all, to the unaccountable outburst of passion by which he had perhaps offended Maria Consuelo beyond forgiveness. With all his affectation of cynicism he had not learned that sin is easy only because it meets with such very general encouragement. Even if he had been aware of that undeniable fact, the knowledge might not have helped him materially.

The hours passed very slowly during the next day, and even when the appointed time had come, Orsino allowed another quarter of an hour to go by before he entered the hotel and ascended to the little sitting-room in which Maria Consuelo received. He meant to be sure that Del Ferice was there before entering, but he was too proud to watch for the latter's coming, or to inquire of the porter whether Maria Consuelo were alone or not. It seemed simpler in every way to appear a little late.

But Del Ferice was a busy man and not always punctual, so that to Orsino's considerable confusion he found Maria Consuelo alone, in spite of his precaution. He was so much surprised as to become awkward, for the first time in his life, and he felt the blood rising in his face, dark as he was.

"Will you forgive me?" he asked, almost timidly, as he held out his hand.

Maria Consuelo's tawny eyes looked curiously at him. Then she smiled suddenly.

"My dear child," she said, "you should not do such things! It is very foolish, you know."

The answer was so unexpected and so exceedingly humiliating, as Orsino thought at first, that he grew pale and drew back a little. But Maria Consuelo took no notice of his

behaviour, and settled herself in her accustomed chair.

"Did you find Del Ferice last night?" she asked, changing the subject without the least hesitation.

"Yes," answered Orsino.

Almost before the word was spoken there was a knock at the door and Del Ferice appeared. Orsino's face cleared, as though something pleasant had happened, and Maria Consuelo observed the fact. She concluded, naturally enough, that the two men had agreed to meet in her sitting-room, and she resented the punctuality which she supposed they had displayed in coming almost together, especially after what had happened on the preceding day. She noted the cordiality with which they greeted each other and she felt sure that she was right. On the other hand she could not afford to show the least coldness to Del Ferice, lest he should suppose that she was annoyed at being disturbed in her conversation with Orsino. The situation was irritating to her, but she made the best of it and began to talk to Del Ferice about the speech he had made on the previous evening. He had spoken well, and she found it easy to be just and flattering at the same time.

"It must be an immense satisfaction to speak as you do," said Orsino, wishing to say something at least agreeable.

Del Ferice acknowledged the compliment by a deprecatory gesture. "To speak as some of my colleagues can,—yes,—it must be a great satisfaction. But Madame d'Aranjuez exaggerates. And, besides, I only make speeches when I am called upon to do so. Speeches are wasted in nine cases out of ten, too. They are, if I may say so, the music at the political ball. Sometimes the guests will dance, and sometimes they will not, but the musicians must try and suit the taste of the great invited. The dancing itself is the thing."

"Deeds not words," suggested

Maria Consuelo, glancing at Orsino, who chanced to be looking at her.

"That is a good motto enough," he said gloomily.

"Deeds may need explanation, after they are done," remarked Del Ferice, unconsciously making such a direct allusion to recent events that Orsino looked sharply at him, and Maria Consuelo smiled.

"That is true," she said.

"And when you need any one to help you, it is necessary to explain your purpose beforehand," observed Del Ferice. "That is what happens so often in politics, and in other affairs of life as well. If a man takes money from me without my consent, he steals, but if I agree to his taking it, the transaction becomes a gift or a loan. A despotic government steals, a constitutional one borrows or receives free offerings. The fact that the despot pays interest on a part of what he steals raises him to the position of the magnanimous brigand who leaves his victims just enough money to carry them to the nearest town. Possibly it is after all a quibble of definitions, and the difference may not be so great as it seems at first sight. But then, all morality is but the shadow cast on one side or the other of a definition."

"Surely that is not your political creed!" said Maria Consuelo.

"Certainly not, madame, certainly not," answered Del Ferice in gentle protest. "It is not a creed at all, but only a very poor explanation of the way in which most experienced people look upon the events of their day. The idea in which we believe is very different from the results it has brought about, and very much higher, and very much better. But the results are not all bad either. Unfortunately the bad ones are on the surface, and the good ones, which are enduring, must be sought in places where the honest sunshine has not yet dispelled the early shadows."

Maria Consuelo smiled faintly, and the slight cast in her eyes was more

than usually apparent, as though her attention were wandering. Orsino said nothing, and wondered why Del Ferice continued to talk. The latter, indeed, was allowing himself to run on because neither of his hearers seemed inclined to make a remark which might serve to turn the conversation, and he began to suspect that something had occurred before his coming which had disturbed their equanimity.

He presently began to talk of people instead of ideas, for he had no intention of being thought a bore by Madame d'Aranjuez, and the man who is foolish enough to talk of anything but his neighbours, when he has more than one hearer, is in danger of being numbered with the tormentors.

Half an hour passed quickly enough after the common chord had been struck, and Del Ferice and Orsino exchanged glances of intelligence, meaning to go away together as had been agreed. Del Ferice rose first, and Orsino took up his hat. To his surprise and consternation Maria Consuelo made a quick and imperative sign to him to remain. Del Ferice's dull blue eyes saw most things that happened within the range of their vision, and neither the gesture nor the look that accompanied it escaped him.

Orsino's position was extremely awkward. He had put Del Ferice to some inconvenience on the understanding that they were to go away together and did not wish to offend him by not keeping his engagement. On the other hand it was next to impossible to disobey Maria Consuelo, and to explain his difficulty to Del Ferice was wholly out of the question. He almost wished that the latter might have seen and understood the signal. But Del Ferice made no sign and took Maria Consuelo's offered hand in the act of leave-taking. Orsino grew desperate and stood beside the two, holding his hat. Del Ferice turned to shake hands with him also.

"But perhaps you are going too?" he said with a distinct interrogation.

Orsino glanced at Maria Consuelo as though imploring her permission to take his leave, but her face was impenetrable, calm and indifferent.

Del Ferice understood perfectly what was taking place, but he found a moment while Orsino hesitated. If the latter had known how completely he was in Del Ferice's power throughout the little scene, he would have then and there thrown over his financial schemes in favour of Maria Consuelo. But Del Ferice's quiet, friendly manner did not suggest despotism, and he did not suffer Orsino's embarrassment to last more than five seconds.

"I have a little proposition to make," said the fat count, turning again to Maria Consuelo. "My wife and I are alone this evening. Will you not come and dine with us, madame? And you, Don Orsino, will you not come too? We shall just make a party of four, if you will both come."

"I shall be enchanted!" exclaimed Maria Consuelo without hesitation.

"I shall be delighted!" answered Orsino with an alacrity which surprised himself.

"At eight then," said Del Ferice, shaking hands with him again, and in a moment he was gone.

Orsino was too much confused, and too much delighted at having escaped so easily from his difficulty to realise the importance of the step he was taking in going to Del Ferice's house, or to ask himself why the latter had so opportunely extended the invitation. He sat down in his place with a sigh of relief.

"You have compromised yourself for ever," said Maria Consuelo with a scornful laugh. "You, the blackest of the Black, are to be numbered henceforth with the acquaintances of Count Del Ferice and Donna Tullia."

"What difference does it make? Besides, I could not have done otherwise."

"You might have refused the dinner."

"I could not possibly have done that. To accept was the only way out of a great difficulty."

"What difficulty?" asked Maria Consuelo relentlessly.

Orsino was silent, wondering how he could explain, as explain he must, without offending her.

"You should not do such things," she said suddenly. "I will not always forgive you."

A gleam of light which, indeed, promised little forgiveness, flashed in her eyes.

"What things?" asked Orsino.

"Do not pretend that you think me so simple," she said, in a tone of irritation. "You and Del Ferice come here almost at the same moment. When he goes, you show the utmost anxiety to go too. Of course you have agreed to meet here. It is evident. You might have chosen the steps of the hotel for your place of meeting instead of my sitting-room."

The colour rose slowly in her cheeks. She was handsome when she was angry.

"If I had imagined that you could be displeased——"

"Is it so surprising? Have you forgotten what happened yesterday? You should be on your knees, asking my forgiveness for that; and instead, you make a convenience of your visit to-day in order to meet a man of business. You have very strange ideas of what is due to a woman."

"Del Ferice suggested it," said Orsino, "and I accepted the suggestion."

"What is Del Ferice to me, that I should be made the victim of his suggestions, as you call them? Besides, he does not know anything of your folly of yesterday, and he has no right to suspect it."

"I cannot tell you how sorry I am."

"And yet you ought to tell me, if you expect that I will forget all this. You cannot? Then be so good as to do the only other sensible thing in your power, and leave me as soon as possible."

"Forgive me, this once!" Orsino entreated in great distress, but not finding any words to express his sense of humiliation.

"You are not eloquent," she said scornfully. "You had better go. Do not come to the dinner this evening either. I would rather not see you. You can easily make an excuse."

Orsino recovered himself suddenly. "I will not go away now, and I will not give up the dinner to-night," he said quietly.

"I cannot make you do either, but I can leave you," said Maria Consuelo, with a movement as though she were about to rise from her chair.

"You will not do that," Orsino answered.

She raised her eyebrows in real or affected surprise at his persistence. "You seem very sure of yourself," she said. "Do not be so sure of me."

"I am sure that I love you. Nothing else matters." He leaned forward and took her hand, so quickly that she had not time to prevent him. She tried to draw it away, but he held it fast.

"Let me go!" she cried. "I will call if you do not!"

"Call all Rome if you will, to see me ask your forgiveness. Consuelo, do not be so hard and cruel. If you only knew how I love you, you would be sorry for me, you would see how I hate myself, how I despise myself for all this——"

"You might show a little more feeling," she said, making a final effort to disengage her hand, and then relinquishing the struggle.

Orsino wondered whether he were really in love with her or not. Somehow, the words he sought did not rise to his lips, and he was conscious that his speech was not of the same temperature, so to say, as his actions. There was something in Maria Consuelo's manner which disturbed him disagreeably, like a cold draught blowing unexpectedly through a warm room. Still he held her hand and endeavoured to rise to the occasion.

"Consuelo!" he cried in a beseeching tone. "Do not send me away! See how I am suffering,—it is so easy for you to say that you forgive!"

She looked at him a moment, and her eyelids drooped suddenly. "Will you let me go, if I forgive you?" she asked in a low voice.

"Yes."

"I forgive you then. Well? do you still hold my hand?"

"Yes."

He leaned forward and tried to draw her towards him, looking into her eyes. She yielded a little, and their faces came a little nearer to each other, and still a little nearer. All at once a deep blush rose in her cheeks, she turned her head away and drew back quickly.

"Not for all the world!" she exclaimed in a tone that was new to Orsino's ear.

He tried to take her hand again, but she would not give it.

"No, no! Go,—you are not to be trusted!" she cried, avoiding him.

"Why are you so unkind?" he asked, almost passionately.

"I have been kind enough for this day," she answered. "Pray go; do not stay any longer; I may regret it."

"My staying?"

"No,—my kindness. And do not come again for the present. I would rather see you at Del Ferice's than here."

Orsino was quite unable to understand her behaviour, and an older and more experienced man might have been almost as much puzzled as he. A long silence followed, during which he sat quite still and she looked steadily at the cover of a book which lay on the table.

"Please go," she said at last, in a voice which was not unkind.

Orsino rose from his seat and prepared to obey her, reluctantly enough and feeling that he was out of tune with himself and with everything.

"Will you not even tell me why you send me away?" he asked.

"Because I wish to be alone," she answered. "Good-bye."

She did not look up as he left the room, and when he was gone she did not move from her place, but sat as she had sat before, staring at the yellow cover of the novel on the table.

Orsino went home in a very unsettled frame of mind, and was surprised to find that the lighted streets looked less bright and cheerful than on the previous evening, and his own immediate prospects far less pleasing. He was angry with himself for having been so foolish as to make his visit to Maria Consuelo a mere appointment with Del Ferice, and he was surprised beyond measure to find himself suddenly engaged in a social acquaintance with the latter, when he had only meant to enter into relations of business with him. Yet it did not occur to him that Del Ferice had in any way entrapped him into accepting the invitation. Del Ferice had saved him from a very awkward situation. Why? Because Del Ferice had seen the gesture Maria Consuelo had made, and had understood it, and wished to give Orsino another opportunity of discussing his project. But if Del Ferice had seen the quick sign, he had probably interpreted it in a way compromising to Madame d'Aranjuez. This was serious, though it was assuredly not Orsino's fault if she compromised herself. She might have let him go without question, and since an explanation of some sort was necessary she might have waited until the next day to demand it of him. He resented what she had done, and yet within the last quarter of an hour he had been making a declaration of love to her. He was further conscious that the said declaration had been wholly lacking in spirit, in passion, and even in eloquence. He probably did not love her after all, and with an attempt at his favourite indifference he tried to laugh at himself.

But the effort was not successful,

and he felt something approaching to pain as he realised that there was nothing to laugh at. He remembered her eyes and her face and the tones of her voice, and he imagined that if he could turn back now and see her again he could say in one breath such things as would move a statue to kisses. The very phrases rose to his lips and he repeated them to himself as he walked along.

Most unaccountable of all had been Maria Consuelo's own behaviour. Her chief preoccupation seemed to have been to get rid of him as soon as possible. She had been very seriously offended with him to-day, much more deeply, indeed, than yesterday, though the cause appeared to his inexperience to be a far less adequate one. It was evident, he thought, that she had not really pardoned his want of tact, but had yielded to the necessity of giving a reluctant forgiveness, merely because she did not wish to break off her acquaintance with him. On the other hand, she had allowed him to say again and again that he loved her, and she had not forbidden him to call her by her name.

He had always heard that it was hard to understand women, and he began to believe it. There was one hypothesis which he had not considered. It was faintly possible that she loved him already, though he was slow to believe that, his vanity lying in another direction. But even if she did, matters were not clearer. The supposition could not account for her sending him away so abruptly and with such evident intention. If she loved him, she would naturally, he supposed, wish him to stay as long as possible. She had only wished to keep him long enough to tell him how angry she was. He resented that again, for he was in the humour to resent most things.

It was all extremely complicated, and Orsino began to think that he might find the complication less interesting than he had expected a few hours earlier. He had little time for

reflection either, since he was to meet both Maria Consuelo and Del Ferice at dinner. He felt as though the coming evening were in a measure to decide his future existence, and it was indeed destined to exercise a great influence upon his life, as any person not disturbed by the anxieties which beset him might easily have foreseen.

Before leaving the house he made an excuse to his mother saying that he had unexpectedly been asked to dine with friends, and at the appointed hour he rang at Del Ferice's door.

CHAPTER XII.

ORSINO looked about him with some curiosity as he entered Del Ferice's abode. He had never expected to find himself the guest of Donna Tullia and her husband, and when he took the robust countess's hand, he was inclined to wish that the whole affair might turn out to be a dream. In vain he repeated to himself that he was no longer a boy but a grown man, of age in the eyes of the law to be responsible for his own actions, and old enough in fact to take what steps he pleased for the accomplishment of his own ends. He found no solace in the reflection, and he could not rid himself of the idea that he had got himself into a very boyish scrape. It would indeed have been very easy to refuse Del Ferice's invitation and to write him a note within the hour explaining vaguely that circumstances beyond his control obliged him to ask another interview for the discussion of business matters. But it was too late now. He was exchanging indifferent remarks with Donna Tullia, while Del Ferice looked on benignantly, and all three waited for Madame d'Aranjuez.

Five minutes had not elapsed before she came, and her appearance momentarily dispelled Orsino's annoyance at his own rashness. He had never before seen her dressed for the evening, and he had not realised how much to her advantage the change from the

ordinary costume, or the inevitable tea-garment, to a dinner-gown would be. She was assuredly not over-dressed, for she wore black without colours, and her only ornament was a single string of beautiful pearls which Donna Tullia believed to be false, but which Orsino accepted as real. Possibly he knew even more about pearls than the countess, for his mother had many and wore them often, whereas Donna Tullia preferred diamonds and rubies. But his eyes did not linger on the necklace, for Maria Consuelo's whole presence affected him strangely. There was something light-giving and even dazzling about her which he had not expected, and he understood for the first time that the language of the newspaper paragraphs was not so grossly flattering as he had supposed. In spite of the great artistic defects of feature, which could not long escape an observer of ordinary taste, it was clear that Maria Consuelo must always be a striking and central figure in any social assembly, great or small. There had been moments in Orsino's acquaintance with her when he had thought her really beautiful; as she now appeared, one of those moments seemed to have become permanent. He thought of what he had dared on the preceding day, his vanity was pleased and his equanimity restored. With a sense of pride which was very far from being delicate, and was by no means well founded, he watched her as she walked in to dinner before him, leaning on Del Ferice's arm.

"Beautiful—eh? I see you think so," whispered Donna Tullia in his ear.

The countess treated him at once as an old acquaintance, which put him at his ease, while it annoyed his conscience.

"Very beautiful," he answered, with a grave nod.

"And so mysterious," whispered the countess again, just as they reached the door of the dining-room. "She is very fascinating,—take care!"

She tapped his arm familiarly with her fan and laughed, as he left her at her seat.

"What are you two laughing at?" asked Del Ferice, smiling pleasantly as he surveyed the six oysters he found upon his plate, and considered which should be left until the last as the crowning tit-bit. He was fond of good eating, and especially fond of oysters as an introduction to the feast.

"What were we laughing at? How indiscreet you are, Ugo! You always want to find out all my little secrets. Consuelo, my dear, do you like oysters, or do you not? That is the question. You do, I know; a little lemon and a very little red pepper; I love red, even to adoring cayenne!"

Orsino glanced at Madame d'Aranjuez, for he was surprised to hear Donna Tullia call her by her first name. He had not known that the two women had reached the first halting-place of intimacy.

Maria Consuelo smiled rather vaguely as she took the advice in the shape of lemon-juice and pepper. Del Ferice could not interrupt his enjoyment of the oysters by words, and Orsino waited for an opportunity of saying something witty.

"I have lately formed the highest opinion of the ancient Romans," said Donna Tullia, addressing him. "Do you know why?"

Orsino professed his ignorance.

"Ugo tells me that in a recent excavation twenty cartloads of oyster-shells were discovered behind one house. Think of that! Twenty cartloads to a single house! What a family must have lived there! Indeed the Romans were a great people!"

Orsino thought that Donna Tullia herself might pass for a heroine in future ages, provided that the shells of her victims were deposited together in a safe place. He laughed politely and hoped that the conversation might not turn upon archæology, which was not his strong point.

"I wonder how long it will be before modern Rome is excavated and

the foreigner of the future pays a franc to visit the ruins of the modern House of Parliament," suggested Maria Consuelo, who had said nothing as yet.

"At the present rate of progress, I should think about two years would be enough," answered Donna Tullia. "But Ugo says we are a great nation. Ask him."

"Ah, my angel, you do not understand those things," said Del Ferice. "How shall I explain? There is no development without decay of the useless parts. The snake casts its old skin before it appears with a new one. And there can be no business without an occasional crisis. Unbroken fair weather ends in a dead calm. Why do you take such a gloomy view, madame?"

"One should never talk of things; only people are amusing," said Donna Tullia, before Madame d'Aranjuez could answer. "Whom have you seen to-day, Consuelo? And you, Don Orsino? And you, Ugo? Are we to talk for ever of oysters, and business, and snakes? Come, tell me, all of you, what everybody has told you. There must be something new. Of course that poor Carantoni is going to be married again, and the Princess Befana is dying, as usual, and the same dear old people have run away with each other, and all that. Of course. I wish things were not always just going to happen. One would like to hear what is said on the day after the events which never come off. It would be a novelty."

Donna Tullia loved talk and noise, and gossip above all things, and she was not quite at her ease. The news that Orsino was to come to dinner had taken her breath away. Ugo had advised her to be natural, and she was doing her best to follow his advice.

"As for me," he said, "I have been tormented all day, and have spent but one pleasant half hour. I was so fortunate as to find Madame d'Aranjuez at home, but that was enough to indemnify me for many sacrifices."

"I cannot do better than say the same," observed Orsino, though with far less truth. "I believe I have read through a new novel, but I do not remember the title and I have forgotten the story."

"How satisfactory!" exclaimed Maria Consuelo, with a little scorn.

"It is the only way to read novels," answered Orsino, "for it leaves them always new to you, and the same one may be made to last several weeks."

"I have heard it said that one should fear the man of one book," observed Maria Consuelo, looking at him.

"For my part, I am more inclined to fear the woman of many."

"Do you read much, my dear Consuelo?" asked Donna Tullia, laughing.

"Perpetually."

"And is Don Orsino afraid of you?"

"Mortally," answered Orsino. "Madame d'Aranjuez knows everything."

"Is she blue then?" asked Donna Tullia.

"What shall I say, madame?" inquired Orsino, turning to Maria Consuelo. "Is it a compliment to compare you to the sky of Italy?"

"For blueness?"

"No,—for brightness and serenity."

"Thanks. That is pretty. I accept."

"And have you nothing for me?" asked Donna Tullia, with an engaging smile.

The other two looked at Orsino, wondering what he would say in answer to such a point-blank demand for flattery.

"Juno is still Minerva's ally," he said, falling back upon mythology, though it struck him that Del Ferice would make a poor Jupiter, with his fat white face and dull eyes.

"Very good!" laughed Donna Tullia. "A little classic, but I pressed you hard. You are not easily caught. Talking of clever men," she added with another meaning glance at Orsino,

"I met your friend to-day, Consuelo."

"My friend? Who is he?"

"Spicca, of course. Whom did you think I meant? We always laugh at her," she said, turning to Orsino, "because she hates him so. She does not know him, and has never spoken to him. It is his cadaverous face that frightens her. One can understand that,—we of old Rome have been used to him since the deluge. But a stranger is horrified at the first sight of him. Consuelo positively dreads to meet him in the street. She says that he makes her dream of all sorts of horrors."

"It is quite true," said Maria Consuelo, with a slight movement of her beautiful shoulders. "There are people one would rather not see, merely because they are not good to look at. He is one of them, and if I see him coming I turn away."

"I know; I told him so to-day," continued Donna Tullia cheerfully. "We are old friends, but we do not often meet nowadays. Just fancy! It was in that little antiquary's shop in the Monte Brianzo,—the first on the left as you go; he has good things—and I saw a bit of embroidery in the window that took my fancy, so I stopped the carriage and went in. Who should be there but Spicca, hat and all, looking like old Father Time. He was bargaining for something,—a wretched old bit of brass—bargaining, my dear! For a few sous! One may be poor, but one has no right to be mean. I thought he would have got the miserable antiquary's skin."

"Antiquaries can generally take care of themselves," observed Orsino incredulously.

"Oh, I dare say; but it looks so badly, you know. That is all I mean. When he saw me he stopped wrangling and we talked a little, while I had the embroidery wrapped up. I will show it to you after dinner. It is sixteenth century, Ugo says,—a piece of a chasuble—exquisite flowers on claret-coloured satin, a perfect gem, so rare

now that everything is imitated. However, that is not the point. It was Spicca; I was forgetting my story. He said the usual things, you know,—that he had heard that I was very gay this year, but that it seemed to agree with me, and so on. And I asked him why he never came to see me, and as an inducement I told him of our great beauty here,—that is you, Consuelo, so please look delighted instead of frowning—and I told him that she ought to hear him talk, because his face had frightened her so that she ran away when she saw him coming towards her in the street. You see if one flatters his cleverness he does not mind being called ugly,—or at least I thought not, until to-day. But to my consternation he seemed angry, and he asked me almost savagely if it were true that the Countess d'Aranjuez,—that is what he called you, my dear—really tried to avoid him in the street. Then I laughed and said I was only joking, and he began to bargain again for the little brass frame, and I went away. When I last heard his voice he was insisting upon seventy-five centimes, and the antiquary was jeering at him and asking a franc and a half. I wonder which got the better of the fight in the end. I will ask him the next time I see him."

Del Ferice supported his wife with a laugh at her story, but it was not very genuine. He had unpleasant recollections of Spicca in earlier days, and his name recalled events which Ugo would willingly have forgotten. Orsino smiled politely, but resented the way in which Donna Tullia spoke of his father's old friend. As for Maria Consuelo, she was a little pale and looked tired. But the countess was irrepressible, for she feared lest Orsino should go away and think her dull.

"Of course we all really like Spicca," she said. "Every one does."

"I do, for my part," said Orsino gravely. "I have a great respect for him, for his own sake, and he is one of my father's oldest friends."

Maria Consuelo looked at him very suddenly, as though she were surprised by what he said. She did not remember to have heard him mention the melancholy old duellist. She seemed about to say something, but changed her mind.

"Yes," said Ugo, turning the subject, "he is one of the old tribe that is dying out. What types there were in those days, and how those who are alive have changed! Do you remember, Tullia? But of course you cannot, my angel; it was far before your time."

One of Ugo's favourite methods of pleasing his wife was to assert that she was too young to remember people who had indeed played a part as lately as after the death of her first husband. It always soothed her.

"I remember them all," he continued. "Old Montevarchi, and Frangipani, and poor Casalverde,—and a score of others."

He had been on the point of mentioning old Astrardente, too, but checked himself.

"Then there were the young ones, who are in middle age now," he went on, "such as Valdarno and the Montevarchi whom you know, as different from their former selves as you can well imagine. Society was different too."

Del Ferice spoke thoughtfully and slowly, as though wishing that some one would interrupt him or take up the subject, for he felt that his wife's long story about Spicca and the antiquary had not been a success, and his instinct told him that Spicca had better not be mentioned again, since he was a friend of Orsino's and since his name seemed to exert a depressing influence on Maria Consuelo. Orsino came to the rescue and began to talk of current social topics in a way which showed that he was not so profoundly prejudiced by traditional ideas as Del Ferice had expected. The momentary chill wore off quickly enough, and when the dinner ended Donna Tullia was sure that it had been successful.

They all returned to the drawing-room and then Del Ferice, without any remark, led Orsino away to smoke with him in a distant apartment.

"We can smoke again when we go back," he said. "My wife does not mind and Madame d'Aranjuez likes it. But it is an excuse to be alone together for a little while, and besides, my doctor makes me lie down for a quarter of an hour after dinner. You will excuse me?"

Del Ferice extended himself upon a leathern lounge, and Orsino sat down in a deep easy-chair.

"I was so sorry not to be able to come away with you to-day," said Orsino. "The truth is, Madame d'Aranjuez wanted some information and I was just going to explain that I would stay a little longer, when you asked us both to dinner. You must have thought me very forgetful."

"Not at all, not at all," answered Del Ferice. "Indeed, I quite supposed that you were coming with me, when it struck me that this would be a much more pleasant place for talking. I cannot imagine why I had not thought of it before, but I have so many details to think of."

Not much could be said for the veracity of either of the statements which the two men were pleased to make to each other, but Orsino had the small advantage of being nearer to the letter, if not to the spirit of the truth. Each, however, was satisfied with the other's tact.

"And so, Don Orsino," continued Del Ferice after a short pause, "you wish to try a little operation in business. Yes? Very good. You have, as we said yesterday, a sum of money ample for a beginning. You have the necessary courage and intelligence. You need a practical assistant, however, and it is indispensable that the point selected for the first venture should be one promising speedy profit. Is that it?"

"Precisely."

"Very good, very good. I think I can offer you both the land and the

partner, and almost guarantee your success, if you will be guided by me."

"I have come to you for advice," said Orsino. "I will follow it gratefully. As for the success of the undertaking, I will assume the responsibility."

"Yes. That is better. After all, everything is uncertain in such matters, and you would not like to feel that you were under an obligation to me. On the other hand, as I told you, I am selfish and cautious. I would rather not appear in the transaction."

If any doubt as to Del Ferice's honesty of purpose crossed Orsino's mind at that moment, it was fully compensated by the fact that he himself distinctly preferred not to be openly associated with the banker. "I quite agree with you," he said.

"Very well. Now for business. Do you know that it is sometimes more profitable to take over a half-finished building than to begin a new one? Often, I assure you, for the returns are quicker and you get a great deal at half price. Now, the man whom I recommend to you is a practical architect, and was employed by a certain baker to build a tenement-building in one of the new quarters. The baker dies, the house is unfinished, the heirs wish to sell it as it is, there are at least a dozen of them—and meanwhile the work is stopped. My advice is this. Buy this house, go into partnership with the unemployed architect, agreeing to give him a share of the profits, finish the building and sell it as soon as it is habitable. In six months you will get a handsome return."

"That sounds very tempting," answered Orsino; "but it would need more capital than I have."

"Not at all, not at all. It is a mere question of taking over a mortgage and paying stamp-duty."

"And how about the difference in ready money, which ought to go to the present owners?"

"I see that you are already beginning

to understand the principles of business," said Del Ferice, with an encouraging smile. "But in this case the owners are glad to get rid of the house on any terms by which they lose nothing, for they are in mortal fear of being ruined by it, as they probably will be if they hold on to it."

"Then why should I not lose, if I take it?"

"That is just the difference. The heirs are a number of incapable persons of the lower class, who do not understand these matters. If they attempted to go on they would soon find themselves entangled in the greater difficulties. They would sink where you will almost certainly swim."

Orsino was silent for a moment. There was something despicable, to his thinking, in profiting by the loss of a wretched baker's heirs. "It seems to me," he said presently, "that if I succeed in this, I ought to give a share of the profits to the present owners."

Not a muscle of Del Ferice's face moved, but his dull eyes looked curiously at Orsino's young face. "That sort of thing is not commonly done in business," he said quietly, after a short pause. "As a rule, men who busy themselves with affairs do so in the hope of growing rich; but I can quite understand that where business is a mere pastime, as it is to be in your case, a man of generous instincts may devote the proceeds to charity."

"It looks more like justice than charity to me," observed Orsino.

"Call it what you will, but succeed first and consider the uses of your success afterwards. That is not my affair. The baker's heirs are not especially deserving people, I believe. In fact they are said to have hastened his death in the hope of inheriting his wealth, and are disappointed to find that they have got nothing. If you wish to be philanthropic, you might wait until you have cleared a large sum and then give it to a school or a hospital."

"That is true," said Orsino. "In the meantime it is important to begin."

"We can begin to-morrow, if you please. You will find me at the bank at mid-day. I will send for the architect and the notary and we can manage everything in forty-eight hours. Before the week is out you can be at work."

"So soon as that?"

"Certainly. Sooner, by hurrying matters a little."

"As soon as possible then. And I will go to the bank at twelve o'clock to-morrow. A thousand thanks for all your good offices, my dear count."

"It is a pleasure, I assure you."

Orsino was so much pleased with Del Ferice's quick and business-like way of arranging matters that he began to look upon him as a model to imitate, so far as executive ability was concerned. It was odd enough that any one of his name should feel anything like admiration for Ugo, but friendship and hatred are only the opposite points at which the social pendulum pauses before it swings backward, and they who live long may see many oscillations.

The two men went back to the drawing-room where Donna Tullia and Maria Consuelo were discussing the complicated views of the almighty dressmaker. Orsino knew that there was little chance of his speaking a word alone with Madame d'Aranjuez and resigned himself to the effort of helping the general conversation. Fortunately the time to be got over in this way was not long, as all four had engagements in the evening. Maria Consuelo rose at half-past ten, but Orsino determined to wait five minutes longer, or at least to make a show of meaning to do so. But Donna Tullia put out her hand as though she expected him to take his leave at the same time. She was going to a ball and wanted at least an hour in which to screw her magnificence up to the dancing-pitch.

The consequence was that Orsino

found himself helping Maria Consuelo into the modest hired conveyance which awaited her at the gate. He hoped that she would offer him a seat for a short distance, but he was disappointed.

"May I come to-morrow?" he asked, as he closed the door of the carriage. The night was not cold and the window was down.

"Please tell the coachman to take me to the *Via Nazionale*," she said quickly.

"What number?"

"Never mind, he knows,—I have forgotten. Good-night."

She tried to draw up the window, but Orsino held his hand on it.

"May I come to-morrow?" he asked again.

"No."

"Are you angry with me still?"

"No."

"Then why——"

"Let me shut the window. Take your hand away."

Her voice was very imperative in the dark. Orsino relinquished his hold on the frame, and the pane ran up suddenly into its place with a rattling noise. There was obviously nothing more to be said.

"*Via Nazionale*! The Signora says you know the house," he called to the driver.

The man looked surprised, shrugged his shoulders after the manner of livery-stable coachmen, and drove slowly off in the direction indicated. Orsino stood looking after the carriage and a few seconds later he saw that the man drew rein and bent down to the front window as though asking for orders. Orsino thought he heard Maria Consuelo's voice answering the question, but he could not distinguish what she said, and the brougham drove on at once without taking a new direction.

He was curious to know whither she was going, and the idea of following her suggested itself, but he instantly dismissed it, partly because it seemed unworthy and partly, perhaps,

because he was on foot, and no cab was passing within hail.

Orsino was very much puzzled. During the dinner she had behaved with her usual cordiality, but as soon as they were alone she spoke and acted as she had done in the afternoon. Orsino turned away and walked across the deserted square. He was greatly disturbed, for he felt a sense of humiliation and disappointment quite new to him. Young as he was, he had been accustomed already to a degree of consideration very different from that which Maria Consuelo thought fit to bestow, and it was certainly the first time in his life that a door,—even the door of a carriage—had been shut in his face without ceremony. What would have been an unpardonable insult coming from a man, was at least an indignity when it came from a woman. As Orsino walked along, his wrath rose, and he wondered why he had not been angry at once.

"Very well," he said to himself. "She says she does not want me. I will take her at her word and I will not go to see her any more. We shall see what happens. She will find out that I am not a child, as she was good enough to call me to-day, and that I am not in the habit of having windows put up in my face. I have much more serious business on hand than making love to Madame d'Aranjuez."

The more he reflected upon the situation, the more angry he grew, and when he reached the door of the club he was in a humour to quarrel with everything and everybody. Fortunately, at that early hour, the place was in the sole possession of half a dozen old gentlemen whose conversation diverted his thoughts though it was the very reverse of edifying. Between the stories they told and the considerable number of cigarettes he smoked while listening to them he was almost restored to his normal frame of mind by midnight, when four or five of his usual companions straggled in and proposed *baccarat*. After his recent successes he could not

well refuse to play, so he sat down rather reluctantly with the rest. Oddly enough he did not lose, though he won but little.

"Lucky at play, unlucky in love," laughed one of the men carelessly.

"What do you mean?" asked Orsino turning sharply upon the speaker.

"Mean? Nothing," answered the latter in great surprise. "What is the matter with you, Orsino? Cannot one quote a common proverb?"

"Oh,—if you meant nothing let us go on," Orsino answered gloomily.

As he took up the cards again, he heard a sigh behind him and turning round saw that Spicca was standing at his shoulder. He was shocked by the melancholy count's face, though he was used to meeting him almost every day. The haggard and cadaverous features, the sunken and careworn eyes, contrasted almost horribly with the freshness and gaiety of Orsino's companions, and the brilliant light in the room threw the man's deadly pallor into strong relief.

"Will you play, count?" asked Orsino making room for him.

"Thanks,—no. I never play nowadays," answered Spicca quietly.

He turned and left the room. With all his apparent weakness his step was not unsteady though it was slower than in the old days.

"He sighed in that way because we did not quarrel," said the man whose quoted proverb had annoyed Orsino.

"I am ready and anxious to quarrel with everybody to-night," answered Orsino. "Let us play baccarat; that is much better."

Spicca left the club alone and walked slowly homewards to his small lodging in the Via della Croce. A few dying embers smouldered in the little fireplace which warmed his sitting-

room. He stirred them slowly, took a stick of wood from the wicker basket, hesitated a moment, and then put it back again instead of burning it. The night was not cold and wood was very dear. He sat down under the light of the old lamp which stood upon the mantelpiece, and drew a long breath. But presently putting his hand into the pocket of his overcoat in search of his cigarette-case he drew out something else which he had almost forgotten, a small something wrapped in coarse paper. He undid it and looked at the little frame of chiselled brass which Donna Tullia had found him buying in the afternoon, turning it over and over, absently, as though thinking of something else.

Then he fumbled in his pockets again and found a photograph, which he had also bought in the course of the day; the photograph of Gouache's latest portrait, obtained in a contraband fashion and with some difficulty from the photographer.

Without hesitation Spicca took a pocket-knife and began to cut the head out, with that extraordinary neatness and precision which characterised him when he used any sharp instrument. The head just fitted the frame. He fastened it in with drops of sealing-wax, and carefully burned the rest of the picture in the embers.

The face of Maria Consuelo smiled at him in the lamp-light, as he turned it in different ways so as to find the best aspect of it. Then he hung it on a nail above the mantelpiece just under a pair of crossed foils.

"That man Gouache is a very clever fellow," he said aloud. "Between them, he and Nature have made a good likeness."

He sat down again and it was a long time before he made up his mind to take away the lamp and go to bed.

(To be continued.)

CHAPTERS FROM SOME UNWRITTEN MEMOIRS.

MY WITCHES' CALDRON. III.

OURS was more or less a bachelor's establishment, and the arrangements of the house varied between a certain fastidiousness and the roughest simplicity. We had shabby table-cloths, alternating with some of my grandmother's fine linen; we had old Derby china for our dessert of dried figs and dry biscuits, and a silver Flaxman teapot (which always poured oblations of tea upon the cloth) for breakfast, and three cracked cups and saucers of unequal patterns and sizes. One morning, Jeames de la Pluche (so my father's servant and factotum chose to call himself when he wrote to the papers) brought in a hamper which had just arrived. When it was unpacked we found, to our great satisfaction, that it contained a lovely breakfast array. A china bowl for my father's tea, ornamented with his initials in gold amid a trellis of roses; beautiful cups for the young ladies, lovely gilt milk-jugs, and a copy of verses, not written, but put together out of printed letters from the *Times*. I quote it from memory:

Of esteem as a token,—
 Fate preserve it unbroken—
 A friend sends this tea-dish of porcelain
 rare,
 And with truth and sincerity
 Wishes health and prosperity
 To the famed M. A. Titmarsh of *Vanity Fair*.

We could not imagine who the friend was from whom the opportune present had come. For many breakfasts we speculated and wondered, guessing one person and another in turn, while we sat at our now elegant board, of which Dr. Oliver Holmes himself might have approved. Years afterwards, when de la Pluche was taking leave of my father and sailing for Australia, where

he had obtained a responsible position, he said, reproachfully: "I sent you the breakfast things; you guessed a great many people, but you never guessed they came from me."

De la Pluche was devoted to my father, and next to him he seemed the most important member of the household. He was more than devoted. We used to think he was a sorcerer. He used to guess at my father's thoughts, plan for him, work for him, always knew beforehand what he would like far better than we ever did. I remember that we almost cried on one occasion, thinking that our father would ultimately prefer him to us. He used to write to the papers and sign his letters, "Jeames de la Pluche, 13 Young Street." "Like to see my last, miss?" he used to say, as he put down a paper on the school-room table. He was a very good and clever man, though a stern ruler. My father had a real friendship and regard for him, and few of his friends ever deserved it more. He lived alone down stairs, where he was treated with great deference, and had his meals served separately, I believe. He always called my father "the Governor." He was a little man, and was very like Holbein's picture of Sir Thomas More in looks. I remember on one occasion coming away from some lecture or entertainment. As we got out into the street it was raining. "It has turned cold," said my father, who was already beginning to be ill. At that moment a voice behind him said, "Coat, sir? Brought it down"; and there was de la Pluche, who had brought his coat all the way from Kensington, helping him on with it. My father thanked him, and then mechanically felt in the pocket for a possible cigar-case.

‘Cigar? Here,’ says de la Pluche, popping one into my father’s mouth, and producing a match ready lighted.

I sometimes hear from my old friend, and I hope he may not be pained by reading of these childish jealousies long past.

When we were children attending our classes, we used to be encouraged to study large sheets, with curious rectangular designs, coloured pink, blue, green, representing the various dynasties and events in the history of past ages viewed from a geometrical point of view; but somehow it was difficult to fit these figures on to the reality. One can understand the pictures of the solar system in the book, but it is a very different thing when one comes to stand on one’s own doorstep, trying to realise that the earth is turning one way and the moon corkscrewing round it, and the planets dancing their mighty course, and the fixed stars disappearing all the time behind the opposite roof, to say nothing of a possibility that one’s feet are up in the air and one’s head hanging down below, without any feeling of inconvenience, except perhaps a certain bewilderment and confusion on most subjects, which may however be peculiar to myself. And so, looking back at one’s own life, one sees it broadly in a sort of map, coloured brightly or sadly according to its moods and states of being; but when one comes to write it down in *Macmillan’s* columns, it is difficult to fit all the events and chronologies quite accurately into their places. If one tries to realize too much at once, the impression is apt to grow chaotic and unmeaning in its complexity; you can’t get the proportions of events; and, indeed, perhaps one of the compensating constituents of all our various existences consists in that disproportion which passing impressions happily take for us, and which they often retain notwithstanding the experiences of years. That little picture of Bewick’s in which a falling leaf conceals the sky, the road, the passing gig and

its occupants, contains the secret of a philosophy which makes existence itself possible, as it would scarcely be if infinity held its proportional place in our finite experience.

Our London home was a happy but a serious home. One day my father said that he had been surprised to hear from his friend Sir Henry D. how seriously our house struck people, compared to other houses: “But I think we are very happy as we are,” said he, and so indeed we were. We lived chiefly with him and with quite little children, or with our grandparents when they came over to visit us. There was certainly a want of initiation: there was no one to suggest all sorts of delightful possibilities, which, as we grew up, might have been made more of; but looking back I chiefly regret it in so far as I think he might have been happier if we had brought a little more action and sunshine into the house, and taken a little more on our own responsibility instead of making ourselves into his shadows.

When my father had done his day’s work, he liked a change of scene and thought. I think he was always glad to leave the ink-blots for his beloved dabs of paint. Sometimes he used to drive into town on the top of an omnibus, sometimes in a brougham; very often he used to take us with him in hansoms, which we much preferred, on long expeditions to Hampstead, to Richmond, to Greenwich, or to studios in distant quarters of the town. There was Mr. David Roberts, whose welcome was certain, and whose sketch-books were a delight to turn over; indeed, the drawings were so accurate, delicate, and suggestive, that they used to make one almost giddy to look at. Once or twice we went to Mr. Cattermole’s, who had a studio among the Hampstead hills, hidden among ancient walls and ivy-trees. Mr. Du Maurier was not yet living there, or I am sure we should have driven further up the hill. As life goes on one grudges that time and chance alone should have separated people

who would have been so happy with each other. Again and again we used to go to Sir Edwin Landseer's beautiful villa in St. John's Wood, and enjoy his delightful company. Among his many stories, I remember his once telling us an anecdote of one of his dogs he was in the habit of taking out at the end of his work. The dog used to wait patiently all day long while Sir Edwin was painting, but he used to come and lie down at his feet and look up in his face towards five o'clock ; and on one occasion, finding his hints disregarded, trotted into the hall and came back with the painter's hat, which he laid on the floor before him.

Then we always enjoyed going on to the house of a neighbour of Sir Edwin's, Mr. Charles Leslie, who dwelt somewhere in that locality with his delightful household. To say nothing of the actual members of that household, there were others also belonging to it who were certainly all but alive, and great favourites with my father. I can still see him standing in the South Kensington Museum, fascinated and laughing before the picture of Sancho Panza, with that look of portentous wisdom and absurdity. As for the charming Duchess, whose portrait is also to be seen, she, or her prototypes, may perhaps have dwelt in the painter's own home. Mr. Dickens used to be at the Leslies' sometimes, and though I cannot quite account for it, I have a general impression of fireworks perpetually going off just outside their windows.

One day that we had come home from one of these expeditions in a big blue fly, with a bony horse,—it was a bright blue fly, with a drab inside to it, and an old white coachman on the box—my father, after a few words of consultation with the coachman, drove off again, and shortly afterwards returning on foot, told us that he had just bought the whole concern, brougham and horse and harness, and that he had sent Jackson (our driver had now become Jackson) to be measured for a great coat. So hence-

forward we came and went about in our own private carriage, which, however, never lost its original name of "the fly," although Jackson's buttons shone resplendent with the Thackeray crest, and the horse too seemed brushed up and promoted to be private.

I remember, or I think I remember, driving in this vehicle to Mr. Frank Stone's studio in Tavistock Square, and how he and my father began laughing and talking about early days. "Do you remember that portrait I began to paint of you over the lady with the guitar?" Mr. Stone said, and he added that he had the picture still, and, going into some deep cupboard, he brought out a cheerful florid picture of my father, as I for one had never seen him, with thick black hair and a young ruddy face. We brought it away with us, and I have it now, and the lady's red dress still appears in the background. It is perhaps fortunate that people, as a rule, are well and happy, and at their best, when their portraits are painted. If one looks down the Academy list year by year, one sees that the pictures represent gentlemen who have just been made Bishops, or Speakers, or Governors-General ; or ladies who are brides in their lovely new clothes and jewels. And again, there are the humble folks who are painted in fun or friendship or lightness of heart. Sad folks hide their heads, sick folks turn them away and are not fit subjects for the painter's art ; and yet, as I write, I am also conscious that facts contradict me, and that there has been a fine run of late upon nurses and death-bed scenes in general.

The happy hour had not yet come for us when Mr. Watts came to live in Kensington at Little Holland House, and built his studios there. This was in later times, and after we had just passed beyond the great pinafore age, which sets such a stamp upon after life and to which my recollections seem chiefly to revert.

He always said that he should like to paint a picture of my father, but

the day for the sitting, alas, never came! And yet I can imagine what that picture might have been, a portrait, such as some portraits, with that mysterious reality in them, that present which is quite apart from years.

I am sure there was no one among all his friends whose society my father enjoyed more than he did that of John Leech, whom he first remembered, so he has often told us with a smile, a small boy at the Charterhouse, in a little blue buttoned-up suit, set up upon a form and made to sing "Home, sweet home," to the others crowding round about. Mr. Leech was anything but a small boy when I remember him in the old Young Street dining-room, where de la Pluche was laying the cloth and Mr. Leech and my father sat talking by the fire. He was very handsome and tall, and kind and shy, and he spoke in a husky, melodious voice: we admired him very much; he was always beautifully dressed, and we used to see him come riding up to the door on nice shining horses; and he generally came to invite us all to something delightful, to go there or to dine with him and his wife at Richmond or elsewhere. My father liked to take us about with him, and I am surprised, as I think of it, at the great good-nature of his friends, who used so constantly to include two inconvenient little girls in the various invitations they sent him. We used to be asked early, and to arrive at all sorts of unusual times. We used to lunch with our hosts and spend long afternoons, and then about dinner-time our father would come in, and sit smoking after dinner while we waited with patient ladies up stairs. Mrs. Brookfield used to live in Portman Street in those days, and thither we used to go very constantly, and to Mrs. Procter's, as well as to various relations' houses, Indian cousins of my father's coming to town for a season with their colonels and their families. Time after time we used to go to the Leeches, who lived in Brunswick Square. We used to play with

the baby, we used to turn over endless books of pictures, and perhaps go out for a walk with kind Mrs. Leech, and sometimes (but this happened very rarely) we used to be taken up to the room where John Leech himself sat at his drawing-table under the square of silver paper which softened the light as it fell upon his blocks. There was his back as he bent over his work, there were the tables loaded with picture-books and drawing-blocks, huge blocks, four times the size of any at home, ready for next week's *Punch*; but our entrance disturbed him (we instinctively felt how much), and we used to hurry quickly back to the drawing-books down stairs, and go on turning over the pencil sketches. I have some of them now, those drawings so roughly indicated, at first so vague, and then by degrees worked upon and altered and modelled and forced into their life as it were, *obliged* to laugh, charmed into kindly wit; as I look at them now, I still recognize the aspect of those by-gone days and places, and I cannot help thinking how much more interesting to remember are some of the shabby homes in which work and beauty and fun are *made*, than those more luxurious and elaborate, which dazzle us so much more at the time, where everything one saw was only bought. But after all the whole secret of life is made up of the things one makes, and those one steals, and those one pays for.

My own children turn over Leech's drawings now, as happily as we ourselves used to do, and it seems to me sometimes as if they also are at play among our own old fancies and in our old haunts. There are the rooms again. There is Mrs. Leech's old piano like an organ standing bolt upright against the wall; there are the brown holland covers on the chairs; there is the domestic lamp, looking (as the lamps of one's youth used to look) tall and dismantled like some gaunt lighthouse erected upon bare mahogany rocks. Besides these things, I remember with

real affection a lovely little miniature portrait of Mrs. Leech, which used to hang upon the wall, and which was done at the time of her marriage. It was indeed the sweetest little picture; and when I saw her one little granddaughter, Dorothy Gillett, this old favourite picture of my childhood came into my mind. It may be hallucination, but, although the houses were so ugly in those days, I still think the people in them looked almost nicer than they do now.

Madame Elise was the great oracle of the 'Fifties, and she used to turn out floating, dignified, squashy beings with close pearly head-dresses and bonnets, and sloping, spreading draperies. They are all to be seen in Mr. Leech's pictures still, and they may be about to come back to life, crinolines and all, for anything I know to the contrary. But I hope not; I think this present generation of women is a happier one than that one was. The characters of the people I remember were certainly different from the characters of their daughters of the present, disporting themselves in the golden Du Maurier age of liberty and out-door life. Mr. Leech once drew our own green curtains for us in a little picture of two girls asking a child what it had for dinner. The child says, "Something that begins with a S."; and when asked what that might be, explains that it was *cold beef*.

A certain number of writers and designers for *Punch* used to dine at Mr. Leech's, coming in with my father towards the close of the day. I remember Mr. Tenniel there, and Mr. Percival Legh, and Mr. Shirley Brooks, and Mr. (not then Sir John) Millais in later days, and an eminent member of a different profession, the present Dean of Rochester. Sometimes, instead of dining in Brunswick Square or at the house in Kensington (to which they afterwards removed), we used to be taken all away to Richmond, to enjoy happy hours upon the terrace, and the light of setting suns.

My father was pleased when some dozen years later the Leeches came to Kensington, and he was greatly interested in their pretty old house. Mr. Leech was pleased too; and at first he used to describe with resigned humour what, alas, became slow torture in the end to his strained nerves,—the different noises as they succeeded each other in what he had expected to find a quiet suburb of London: the milkman, the carrier, the industrious carpenter, all following in rotation one by one, from the very earliest morning. But his nerves were altogether overstrung. I remember hearing him once, in far, far back times, tell a little story, scarcely perhaps worth re-telling. He was looking altogether ill and upset, and he told us that he had hardly recovered from a little shock the night before. Coming home late, and as he went up stairs, he had been annoyed by hearing the howling of a dog in a garden at the back of the house. He did not know that one of his young sisters had come to see his wife that evening, had been persuaded to stay for the night, and put to sleep in the very room into which he now turned, throwing up the window to see where the noise came from. The moon was shining, and happening to look round he was quite overcome, seeing a figure lying motionless upon the bed, while the light poured coldly upon a white marble profile.

I was going along the Kensington Road towards Palace Green one fine morning, when I met my father carefully carrying before him two blue Dutch china pots, which he had just surreptitiously taken away out of his own study. "I am going to see if they won't stand upon Leech's dining-room chimney-piece," he said. I followed him, hoping, I am afraid, that they would not stand there, for we were well used to lament the accustomed disappearance of his pretty ornaments and china dishes. People may have stared to see him carrying his china, but that I do not now remember,—only this, that he was amused and in-

terested, and that we found the iron gates open to the court in front, and the doors of the Leeches' house all wide open, though the house itself was empty and the family had not yet arrived. Workmen were coming and going, busy hammering carpets and making arrangements. We crossed the hall, and then my father led the way into the pretty old dining-room, with its new Turkey carpet and its tall windows looking to the gardens at the back. "I knew they would stand there," said he, putting up the two blue pots on the high narrow ledge; and there to my mind they will ever stand.

It was in the *Quarterly Review* that my father wrote of Leech's pictures. "While we live we must laugh," he says, and then (contrasting the past and the present of caricatures, and the rough designs of his own youth with those of a later, more charming fashion) he goes on: "We cannot afford to lose Satyr with his pipe and dances and gambols. But we have washed, combed, clothed, and taught the rogue good manners; or rather, let us say, he has learnt them himself, for he is of nature soft and kindly, and he has put aside his mad pranks and tipsy habits; and, frolicsome always, has become gentle and harmless, smitten into shame by the pure presence of our women, the sweet, confiding smiles of our children."

Do we laugh enough? Have we over-

eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge? I cannot say. The art of design, as practised by the successors of John Leech who have followed in his steps, still holds its own delightful sway; but the kindred arts of action, of oratory, of literature, have, to narrow-minded critics accustomed to the "Spade with which Wilkinson hath tilled the land," taken most unpleasant forms of sincerity. Sometimes I wonder how the moralist would write of us now, were he still among us. I don't know how the present will strike the new generation, when it has grown up to look back in turn upon this somewhat complicated phase of civilization. Sheep's clothing is out of date, and wolf-skins all the fashion now; but they are imitation wolf-skins. The would-be Lion affects the Donkey's ears; the Pharisee is anxious to be seen in the Publican's society for the good impression it makes upon his constituency. It is all very perplexing, and not very edifying to speculate on. And then I feel that any day, while one is fumbling and probing and dissecting and splitting hairs, some genius such as John Leech's silently appears, and touches commonplace things, and lo! here is a new light upon earth, a new happiness; here is another smile in the land. "Can we have too much of truth and fun and beauty and kindness?" said John Leech's Friend.

ANNE RITCHIE.

THE NEXT CONCLAVE.

THE wearer of the triple tiara occupies a most anomalous position. Since the Doges of Venice he is the sole example remaining of an elected monarch. He holds office for life, not by right of birth but of election. He is at once the head of a powerful ecclesiastical corporation and the monarch of a temporal kingdom, which he claims indeed, but which he does not possess. So far as temporalities are concerned, he is as much a pretender as a Bourbon is to France. But in the spiritual sphere he is supreme: he both reigns and governs; and it is of very few political heads that so much can be said. The constitutional monarch reigns but does not govern; the American President governs but does not reign; the French President neither reigns nor governs. But the Pope in his ecclesiastical realm does both; in this department he is a true despot.

The Pope, then, is at once a political survival, a pretender, and a despot. And the manner of his election is of a piece with the peculiarity of his position. It is a strange and picturesque proceeding; and in an age when elections are all reduced to a monotonous use of ballot-boxes, polling-booths, committee-rooms and the like, the quality of picturesqueness in a papal election is something to be thankful for.

Papal elections have an interesting history. The first Popes seem to have been simply bishops of Rome, and to have been chosen to fill that place in the same way as the bishops of other sees. The original body of electors were the clergy and the people of Rome. In addition to this some of the kings of the different European States claimed to have a word in the election, a circumstance which gave

rise to the claims of Austria, France, and Spain to the so-called right of veto. The abuses and disturbances that occurred in the elections soon rendered reform imperative. Symmachus was the first Pope to regulate the conduct of elections by a Bull. This was issued in the year 498; but it was not until the year 1059 that any fundamental change was made. Then Nicholas II. issued a most important Bull, by which he decreed that in future the right of election should belong to the cardinal bishops and cardinal priests, while he restricted the right of the lower clergy and the Roman people to that of assent merely. But the lower clergy and the Roman people were not prepared to surrender their rights tamely, and they made their claims good by force of arms. And in this way Lucius II. in 1144 and Hadrian IV. in 1154 were both elected by the intervention of the Roman people. The Bull of Nicholas II. had not defined the number of votes requisite to make an election, and this led to the most deplorable consequences. For when Alexander III. was elected, the minority of dissenting cardinals took upon themselves to declare the election void, and to elect an Anti-Pope. With the view of preventing such misfortunes in the future, Alexander decreed that the election should be made by the votes of two-thirds of the cardinals. But even with these regulations difficulties in the elections still continued. One difficulty was that no period having been fixed within which the election was to take place, it was sometimes unduly delayed, and the Holy See remained vacant for periods disastrously long. When Clement IV. died in 1268, no election was actually made for a period of two years. But Gregory X. who succeeded

him determined to correct this abuse, and in a Bull issued at the Council of Lyons he decreed that the election should be begun ten days after the decease of the late Pontiff. This Bull was modified and amended in some unimportant respects by Clement V. at the Council of Vienna, and by Clement VI. at Avignon. For a period of over one hundred and fifty years no reform in the conduct of the elections was made, notwithstanding the fact that schisms, scandals, and abuses flourished luxuriantly. But in 1505 that warlike Pontiff Julius II., whom one would rather have expected to have been wholly absorbed in schemes of territorial aggrandisement, issued a most stringent Bull with the object of checking simoniacal elections; and in 1558 Paul IV. fulminated tremendous penalties on those guilty of the practice of making compacts for the election of the next Pope during the lifetime of the actual occupant of the Holy See. Such, briefly, was the purport of the various Bulls issued to regulate the papal elections up to the year 1562. This year is a remarkable one in the history of the subject, because it was then that the whole body of the laws regulating papal elections was codified and amended by Pius IV., and his Bull forms the fundamental basis of the whole present law on the subject. Yet even more important was the Bull of Gregory XV. issued in 1621, which took a further step forward in the way of codification and emendation. Moreover it made one alteration of the greatest moment. The Bull of Pius IV. permitted the election to be made either in Conclave or out of it; but Gregory decreed that for the future the election should be made in Conclave only.

The constitution of Gregory XV. forms a complete code of the law of papal elections. But it only provided for an election to be conducted under normal conditions. Such circumstances as the loss of the Temporal Power, or the exile of the Pope, naturally did not present themselves to the minds

of Gregory and his predecessors. Down to the end of the last century the Popes took their place in Europe in the same way as any other crowned head. But then a great change took place. The flood of revolution was let loose, and Napoleon sprang upon an astonished world. The Pontiff at that time on the throne, Pius VI., felt the full force of the blast, and he soon saw the necessity of providing for a state of things hitherto strange in the annals of the Papacy. He began by issuing a Bull in February 1797, by which he made it lawful for the cardinals present in Rome to proceed at once to the election of a new Pontiff without waiting for those cardinals who might be prevented from coming to Rome by force of circumstances. Later in the same year he decreed that the cardinal electors should first of all deliberate on the best place for holding the Conclave, and that this should be held in the place decreed by the majority most convenient; and he further declared that the customary space of ten days need not necessarily be allowed to elapse before proceeding to the election. Events moved on rapidly, and in February 1798 the unfortunate Pius was hurried away by force from his ancestral seat to the monastery of the Certosa at Florence. From that retreat he issued another Bull intended to provide for the calamitous circumstances of the Holy See, by which he made it lawful for the space of ten days to be prolonged or abbreviated, and permitted a departure from the established ceremonies, solemnities, and customs hitherto observed, provided that they did not affect the substance of the elections. In particular he made it lawful for the cardinals to depart from that provision of the constitution of Paul IV. which forbade any discussion or arrangement relative to a future election prior to the death of the Pontiff; but at the same time he retained in force that portion of the provision forbidding any discussion or arrangement as to the particular person to be elected. He

then went on to provide for the possibility of his own death happening away from Rome, and decreed that the right of election should belong only to those cardinals of whom there happened to be a majority in the dominions of any one Catholic Prince, and those others who should go to join the former in that country. He further provided that these cardinals should name a place for holding the Conclave and summon the other cardinals thereto, and that the election should go forward without delay. This Bull came none too soon, for in August of the next year Pius died an exile at Valence, and passed, to use his own expression, from great troubles to eternal peace.

The provisions of this Bull were fully made use of in the following year, and in a Conclave held at Venice, Cardinal Chiaromonti ascended the throne under the title of Pius VII. Like his predecessor he suffered exile, but returned to Rome under the auspices of the Congress of Vienna. Both he, and at a subsequent date Gregory XVI., thought it necessary to re-enact the provisions of Pius VI.

It is unnecessary to enter at length into the history of the Pontificate of Pius IX.; but special attention should be given to three Bulls published by him with reference to the election of his successors for the light they throw upon his relations with the kingdom of Italy, and upon the relations which that kingdom is likely to have with the Papacy in the future. The Bulls are the more worthy of attention because it is only lately that they have become generally known.

The first of the three was published on August 23rd, 1871, eleven months after the entry of the Italian troops into Rome, an event which deprived the Pope of the last vestige of the temporalities that then remained to him. In this Bull he begins by bewailing the miseries of the time and declaring his intention of following the example of Pius VI., in providing for the eventualities of the next election. He then declared it lawful for the cardinals on

his decease to depart from the rules laid down as to the time, the place, and the closing of the Conclave. He directed the cardinals present at the Curia at his death, to proceed without delay, "After making an accurate examination of the conditions of the times and of the conditions of Rome, to deliberate whether the election of the new Pontiff should be made in that city or out of it." Then come provisions to meet the possibility either of his being compelled to leave Rome to avoid greater evils or of his being taken away by force, in either of which events he might die away from the city. He therefore decreed that in such a case the election should take place wherever there should be assembled as many cardinals as exceeded only one-half of the number then living, whether in Conclave or out of it, without waiting for the lapse of the customary ten days or for the arrival of absent cardinals. In order to carry this out he directed that the cardinal, or if they be more than one the highest in dignity, or in the absence of cardinals the Apostolic Nuncio, or the bishop, who happened to be present in the place where he died, should notify his death to the Cardinal Deacon and as many other cardinals as possible. The Cardinal Deacon (in conjunction if possible with the three highest cardinals of each order and the Chancellor), are then to choose some convenient place for holding the election. This place is to be at once notified to the other cardinals, and they are to be summoned to an election forthwith. In conclusion he makes these regulations applicable not only to the election of his immediate successor, but also to successive elections, provided of course any new regulations are not made by future Pontiffs.

It is clear that at the date of this Bull Pius IX. had in mind the possibility of his making a voluntary flight of a similar kind to his earlier expedition to Gaeta, or of his being driven from Rome by actual violence. He also contemplated the possibility of grave obstacles being thrown in the

way of holding the Conclave at Rome, even in the event of his own death in that city. The whole Bull breathes the positive conviction that he had nothing to hope from the newly established kingdom, and that the breach would tend rather to widen than to narrow.

The second Bull is dated September, 1874, and is to the following purpose. It begins by confirming the former Bull and declaring that it is to remain in force and vigour, even although during the vacancy of the Holy See public order should remain undisturbed and though the dangers to be apprehended are removed. It proceeds, "We decree that to the College of Cardinals only or to a majority of them, and to no one else, belongs the right of judging the necessity or expediency of making use of all or any of the powers granted by us"; and then goes on to declare that though these powers are granted to them, nevertheless no change has been made in the laws in force relative to the conduct of affairs of the Holy See during the period of vacancy, and it particularly exhorts the cardinals in no way to recede from the full rights of the Apostolic See and the Roman Church. Next, after declaring that the usual customs and ceremonies of a Conclave may be dispensed with, it is decreed that what happens in the Conclave must be kept more strictly secret than ever. An exhortation follows to make the election, "Without showing an inclination or deference towards any one whatever, disregarding the opposition of the secular power." The next provisions are most important. It had been decreed by Gregory X. in the Council of Lyons that "The lords and other rulers or officials of the city in which the election of the Pontiff should be made should have authority and power to enforce the observation of the laws promulgated with regard to the said election." It had again been decreed by Clement V. in the Council of Vienna that certain powers should be granted to the authorities just named; and by a Bull of Pius IV. certain pro-

visions had been made with regard to the nomination of prelates, governors, civil officials, and others appointed to look after the Conclave. These provisions, made to ensure the fulfilment of the laws regulating the elections and entrusting certain civil authorities with powers for that very object, are now specifically and expressly repealed.

It is clear from this Bull that, as time went on, the hostility of Pius IX. towards the Kingdom of Italy and the Civil Power continued to grow. He seems to have been particularly afraid that the Civil Power might, during the vacancy of the Holy See which would ensue upon his death, and before the nomination of his successor, endeavour to come to some terms with the Sacred College. He is therefore most emphatic in his exhortation to the cardinals not to bate one jot of the rights of the Papacy. Moreover he appears to dread that some pressure would be put by the Civil Power upon the cardinals in making the election, and he particularly warns them to resist any influence of this sort. And lastly, in order to deprive the Civil Power of any pretext for interference in the election, he withdraws from the authorities named in the Bulls of Gregory X., Clement V., and Pius IV. the powers therein conferred upon them.

As though he had not done enough, Pius IX. issued yet another Bull on October 10th, 1877, just four months before his death. It consists of little more than a repetition of the two preceding ones, and forms but a pretext for the insertion of one important declaration to the following purpose:—

Considering the character, the catastrophes, and the manifest dangers of the present times, we cannot the less ardently desire that the place fixed upon for proceeding to the elections should be outside the confines of Italy. This desire of ours which we openly profess, we now commend very warmly to the cardinals of the Holy Roman Church. Therefore if, for reasons which we cannot foresee, it shall seem good to them to act differently, and if they think that the meetings for the election

should be called together in Rome or in some other part of Italy, our absolute desire and command is that, in case of any obstacle whatever being put in the way of the place or the persons of the Conclave, whether by public authority or by private individuals, much more if it is attempted to tie the hands of any cardinal or remove him in any way or hinder him from entering the Conclave, the meetings be at once dissolved and transferred to some more secure spot outside Italy, even although the voting may have begun.

The words of the Bull put it beyond the possibility of doubt that Pius IX. so mistrusted the Civil Power that he ardently desired the next election to be held outside Italy. And so great was the influence of his well-known wishes that the Sacred College very nearly acceded to them. In the first general congregation held in the Vatican upon the day after his death, the majority of the cardinals decided to hold the Conclave abroad; but the next morning this decision was reversed. Indeed, Pius himself hardly cherished the hope that his desires on this point would be fulfilled, and he therefore published some regulations to be observed by the Sacred College on the occasion of the vacancy of the Apostolic See. They were issued on January 10th, 1878, the day after the death of Victor Emmanuel, and less than a month before his own death. The following are some of its most important provisions bearing upon the relations to be observed toward the Civil Power:—

Article 1. The attitude of the Sacred College during the vacancy of the Holy See shall be the same as that held by it since the day of the occupation of Rome. Therefore (a) the cardinals neither individually nor collectively shall put themselves into relation with any governing authority whatever; (b) they shall dress and walk out in a private manner as hitherto; (c) they shall not perform any functions in public.

Article 10. If any person armed or accompanied by persons armed, presents himself at the doors of the Vatican with the object of invading it, the doors shall not be opened but they shall rather be left to be broken in by the invader.

Article 12. (in part.) The Chancellor, therefore, or any one else shall not receive any one who has declared his wish to come to perform acts of sovereignty, to possess himself of any part of the Vatican, or to violate in any way the rights of the Holy See.

Article 13. If the actual government should offer its services or support to the Sacred College, such offer may be made in two ways, in writing or verbally, by some representative of the said government presenting himself to the Cardinal Deacon or the Cardinal Chancellor. In the first case the cardinal shall abstain from replying to the said communication and instead shall direct to the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See a note, in which the said Corps shall be prayed to make known to the Government actually in occupation of Rome, (a) that the Sacred College mindful of its oaths cannot in any way change the situation left to them by the Pontiff, which ought to be transmitted intact to his successor; (b) that consequently the Sacred College cannot enter into relations with the Government, with which the Pontiff had no communication; (c) that besides, as far as the interior of the Apostolic Palace is concerned, it has no need of any assistance, and so far as external tranquillity is concerned, as it does not govern the city it has no responsibility. In the second case, where a representative of the Government shall demand an interview with the Cardinal Chancellor or the Cardinal Deacon the same shall receive him in the manner laid down in Article 12, and shall take advantage of the opportunity to make the same declarations and protests above stated in the case of a note being directed to the Diplomatic Corps. In any case no other member of the Sacred College shall be able to receive such visits and communications on the part of the actual government, but shall direct them to the Cardinal Heads of Orders, or the Cardinal Chancellor, with the object of preserving in these difficult moments the unity of authority, action, and direction.

Article 14. In case of external violence directed to provoke disorder or with the object of entering the Vatican, the Sacred College shall take the necessary measures, and shall give notice to the Diplomatic Corps, in order that order may be re-established and liberty restored to the cardinals.

Article 15. In case of an attempt to take possession of the library, the museums, the archives, or any other part of the

Vatican, the doors shall be shut, they shall be left to be knocked down and the necessary protest having been made by the Cardinal Chancellor, notice of the affair shall be given to the Diplomatic Corps by an official note.

Article 16. A like protest shall be made in the event of an attempt being made to disarm the guards of the Palace and substitute Italian forces for them.

These then are the principal provisions of the regulations which bear on the relations of the Holy See to the Italian Kingdom. It cannot be said that they breathe anything but a fixed determination of irreconcilability. Pius IX. moved heaven and earth to procure the next meeting of the Conclave outside Italy. Finding, as time passed, that this extreme step would probably not be taken, he endeavoured by all possible precautions to secure that the cardinals should hold no parley with the Roman authorities. These were indeed to be treated almost as non-existent, and no submission was to be made to them except under force.

The three Bulls and the Regulations of Pius IX. are the last words on Papal elections that have emanated from the Vatican. It is probable that Leo XIII. may have either simply re-enacted the Bulls of his predecessor or have modified them in certain particulars. What then are his intentions with regard to the next Conclave? Are we to expect it to be held under like conditions to the last or not? Is it possible or probable that the next election will be made outside Italy? To answer these questions a few facts must be taken into consideration.

On June 9th, 1889, a statue to Giordano Bruno was unveiled at Rome in the Campo di Fiori amidst great celebrations. This event gave much offence to the Pope, and a circular was issued by Cardinal Rampolla to the Catholic Powers intimating that it was impossible for the Pope to remain in Rome. On June 29th a secret Consistory was held, in which it is only known that the Pope spoke bitterly of the offending celebrations, and

that his departure from Rome was gravely discussed. It is more than probable that the provisions made by Pius IX. for holding a Conclave outside Italy were absolutely confirmed, or at any rate with some slight modifications. A still more curious event occurred later in the summer of the same year. Count Lefebvre de Béhaine, the French Ambassador at the Vatican, was at Paris, and during his absence M. Baylin de Monbel, the French Chargé d'Affaires, took a telegram to the Pope begging him to act quickly, for all was ready. The Pope replied that it was necessary to consider so important a matter, and requested M. de Monbel to call again in a couple of days. He did so, but Leo was unable to screw his courage to the sticking-point, and the scheme so carefully arranged came to nothing.

These two incidents are of small importance in themselves, but they are straws which show the way of the wind. It is clear, not only that Leo XIII. is so incensed with the Roman Government that he is not indisposed to fly from the Vatican, but also that he is backed up by the French, or at least a section of the French which is influentially if not numerically important. And this supposition is confirmed by another incident of somewhat earlier date. In May, 1887, an attempt at reconciliation between the Pope and the Italian Government was made, the approaching jubilee of the former being deemed a fit time for effecting so felicitous a consummation. Unfortunately the Jesuits interfered to prevent it, and a high ecclesiastical functionary wrote to the Pope from Paris to say that the French Government looked upon it with disfavour, adding that it was their intention to re-open the Roman question upon a favourable opportunity. It is quite certain then that the Pope has the support of France in his quarrel with the Kingdom of Italy. The Papacy is, as Mr. Gladstone wrote in the days of Pius IX., the great political mendi-

cant of the world, and the French alone now are found inclined to hearken to its cries. They have not yet forgiven the Italians for having formed themselves into a powerful and united State; still less have they forgiven them for joining the Triple Alliance. In the Roman question they see the means of their revenge. It is the sword of Damocles that they hang over Italy. And the Pope on his side is not an unwilling agent. Like his predecessor he will have no parley with the Italian Kingdom. Whatever may be said of the Roman Pontiffs, they possess the virtue of heroic resistance; their obstinacy is sublime. It is impossible not to admire the unflinching determination of Pius VI. and Pius VII. not to submit except to force. And so it was with Pius IX. Having once made up his mind not to play the part of the liberal Pope any longer, he nailed his colours to the mast, and fought stoutly to the end. His successor is equally inflexible. At the close of last year he pronounced an allocution in which, referring to the attack on the Roman pilgrims in the Pantheon, he spoke bitterly of the enemies of the Apostolic See. And from this course he is not likely to cease so long as he receives the tacit support of France.

It is certain then, as well as anything can be, that Leo XIII. can have in no way diminished the vigour of the Bulls and Regulations of his predecessor with reference to the next Conclave. The probability is rather that he has increased them, especially with reference to the place of the Conclave. We must be prepared also for the possibility of his flight from Rome, in which case the Conclave would certainly be held outside Italy. And this is of more importance than at first sight appears. The Popes elected out of Rome are not so likely to be Italians. For seventy years the Holy See was established at Avignon, and during that period all the Popes, seven in number, were French. The establishment of the Holy See in

France or Spain may have, then, a more than merely local importance with regard to the future of the Papacy.

It is said the Sacred College did not, in electing Leo XIII., make use of the dispensing powers granted by the Bulls of his immediate predecessor. That is to some extent of good omen for the future amicable relations between the Kingdom and the Papacy. Nevertheless it remains only too true that the Popes refuse to accept the accomplished fact of the new situation. They refuse to see in it anything but a hindrance to their spiritual authority. An eminent English Catholic in the world of letters has lately tried to show not only that the Temporal Power is a good and desirable thing in itself, but has also ventured to point out what he considers to be a possible *modus vivendi* between the Quirinal and the Vatican. He declares, however, that the present position of the Pope is one of irreconcilability. He stigmatises the Law of Guarantees as a delusion and a snare: a delusion because it is a mere statement of the Italian Government; a snare because the Pope by accepting it would reduce himself to the position of a mere pensioner, a position to which death itself would be preferable. Yet what is the *modus vivendi* which he suggests as possible? It is that the Law of Guarantees should be a guarantee not merely of the Italian Government, but of the Powers of Europe, and that the Pope should have real property assigned to him of sufficient value to enable him to defray the expenses of his government. But if there is one thing that more than anything else demonstrates the hopelessness of the Pope's claim for the Temporal Power, it is surely his suggestion of an International guarantee. That is certainly one thing that the Italian Government would never tolerate. Nor does the eminent writer in question help to assuage the irritation, or bridge over the gulf, by assailing the Italian Government with invective, and by such assertions as that it is

supported merely by revolutionary and anti-Christian sectaries. That is only adding fuel to the fire, and rendering reconciliation more remote than ever.

And the Pope's hostility towards the Italian Kingdom seems to grow with the lapse of time, as the following incidents show. The year 1891 was the first year that the Bishops of Savoy omitted to send birthday congratulations to the King of Italy. Who can doubt that they took their cue from the Vatican? Again, when the King and Queen of Italy went lately to Palermo, the Archbishop had instructions from the Vatican not to take part in the reception, nor to

officiate in the *Te Deum*. And this conduct is emphasised by the fact that the archbishopric of Palermo is a piece of Crown patronage. Who can wonder that some Italians are found to advocate the abolition or modification of the Law of Guarantees? It is also too true that the French, or a section of them, are prepared to support the Popes in their pretensions, if thereby they can inflict a wound on Italian unity. This being so, and until wiser counsels prevail, we must be prepared for the possibility of seeing the Papal elections conducted in the abnormal manner expected and even desired by Pius IX.

C. B. ROYLANCE KENT.

A CHAPTER ON PLATO.

I.

WITH the world of intellectual production, as with that of organic generation, Nature makes no sudden starts. *Natura nihil facit per saltum*; and in the history of philosophy there are no absolute beginnings. Fix where we may the origin of this or that doctrine or idea, the doctrine of "reminiscence," for instance, or of "the Perpetual Flux," the theory of "induction," or the philosophic view of things generally, the specialist will still be able to find us some earlier anticipation of that doctrine, that mental tendency. The most elementary act of mental analysis takes time to do; the most rudimentary sort of speculative knowledge, abstractions so simple that we can hardly conceive the human mind without them, must grow and with difficulty. Philosophy itself, mental and moral, has its preparation, its forethoughts, in the poetry that preceded it. A powerful generalisation thrown into some salient phrase, such as the *πάντα ῥεῖ* of Heraclitus, may startle a particular age by its novelty; but takes possession there only because its root, all along, was somewhere among the natural though but half-developed instincts of the human mind itself. Plato has seemed to many no less than the creator of philosophy; and it is an immense step he makes, from the crude or turbid beginnings of scientific inquiry with the Ionians or the Eleatics, to that wide range of perfectly finished philosophical literature. His encyclopædic view of the whole domain of knowledge is more than a mere step in a progress. Nothing that went before it, for compass and power and charm, had been really

comparable to it. Plato's achievement may well seem an absolutely fresh thing in the morning of the mind's history. Yet, in truth, the world Plato had entered into was already almost weary of philosophical debate, bewildered by the oppositions of sects, the claims of rival schools. Language and the processes of thought were already become sophisticated, the very air he breathed sickly with offcast speculative atoms. In the *Timæus*, dealing with the origin of the universe, he figures less as the author of a new theory, than as already an eclectic critic of older ones, himself somewhat perplexed by theory and counter-theory. Some of the results of patient earlier thinkers, even then dead and gone, are of the structure of his philosophy; not like the stray carved corner of some older edifice, here or there amid the new, but everywhere in it, like minute relics of earlier organic life in the very stone he builds with. The central and most intimate principles of his teaching challenge us to go back beyond them, not merely to his own immediate, somewhat enigmatic, master,—to Socrates, who survives chiefly in his pages—but to various precedent schools of speculative thought, in Greece, in Ionia, in Italy; beyond these into that age of poetry, in which the first efforts of philosophic apprehension had hardly understood themselves; beyond that unconscious philosophy, again, to certain constitutional tendencies, persuasions, forecasts of the intellect itself, such as had given birth, it would seem, to thoughts akin to Plato's in the older civilisations of India and of Egypt as they still exercise their authority over ourselves. The thoughts of Plato, like the language he has to use (we

find it so again, in turn, with those predecessors of his, when we pass from him to them), are covered with the traces of previous labour and have had their earlier proprietors. If at times we become aware in reading him of certain anticipations of modern knowledge, we are also quite obviously among the relics of an older, a poetic, or half-visionary world. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that in Plato, in spite of his wonderful savour of literary freshness, there is nothing absolutely new; or rather, as in many other very original products of human genius, the seemingly new is old also, a palimpsest, a tapestry of which the actual threads have served before; or like the animal frame itself, every particle of which has already lived and died many times over. Nothing but the life-giving principle of cohesion is new; the new perspective, the resultant complexion, the expressiveness, which familiar thoughts attain by novel juxtaposition. In other words, the *form* is new. But then, in the creation of philosophical literature, as in all other products of art, form (in the full signification of that word), form is everything, and the mere matter is nothing.

II.

There are three different ways in which the criticism of philosophic, of all speculative opinion whatever, may be conducted. The doctrines of Plato's *Republic*, for instance, may be regarded as so much truth or falsehood, to be accepted, or rejected, as such by the student of to-day. That is the dogmatic method of criticism; judging every product of human thought, however alien or distant from one's self, by its congruity with the assumptions of Bacon or Spinoza, of Mill or Hegel, according to the mental preference of the particular critic. There is, secondly, the more generous Eclectic, or Syncretic, method, which aims at a selection from contending schools of the various grains of truth dispersed

among them. It is the method which has prevailed in periods of large reading but with little inceptive force of their own, like that of the Alexandrian Neo-Platonism in the third century, or the Neo-Platonism of Florence in the fifteenth. Its natural defect is in the tendency to misrepresent the true character of the doctrine it professes to explain, that it may harmonise so much the better with other elements of a pre-conceived system. Dogmatic and Eclectic criticism alike have in our own century, under the influence of Hegel and his predominant theory of the ever-changing "Time-spirit" or *Zeitgeist*, given way to a third method of criticism, the Historic method; which bids us replace the doctrine, the system, we may be busy with, or such an ancient monument of philosophic thought as the *Republic*, as far as possible in the group of conditions, intellectual, social, material, amid which it was actually produced, if we would really understand it. That ages have their genius as well as the individual; that in every age there is a peculiar *ensemble* of conditions which determines a common character in every product of that age, in business and art, in fashion and speculation, in religion and manners, in men's very faces; that nothing man has projected from himself is really intelligible except at its own date, and from its proper point of view in the never-resting Secular Process; the solidarity of philosophy, of the intellectual life, with common or general history; that what it behoves the student of philosophic systems to cultivate is the "historic sense": by force of these convictions many a normal, or at first sight abnormal, phase of speculation has found a reasonable meaning for us. As the strangely twisted pine-tree, which would be a freak of Nature on an English lawn, is seen to have been the creature of necessity, of the logic of certain facts, if we replace it, in thought, amid the contending forces of the Alpine torrent that actually shaped its growth; so, beliefs the most fan-

tastic, the "Communism" of Plato, for instance, have their natural propriety when duly correlated with those facts, those conditions round about them, of which they are in truth a part. In the intellectual, as in the organic, world the given product, its normal or abnormal characteristics, are determined, as people say, by the "environment." The business of the young scholar therefore, in reading Plato, is not to take his side in a controversy, to adopt or refute Plato's opinions, to modify, or make apology for, what may seem erratic or impossible in him; still less, to furnish himself with arguments on behalf of some theory or conviction of his own. His duty is rather to watch intelligently, but with strict indifference, the mental process there, as he might watch a game of skill; better still, as in reading *Hamlet* or the *Divine Comedy*, so in reading the *Republic*, to entertain for its dramatic interest the spectacle of a powerful, of a sovereign intellect translating itself, amid a complex group of conditions which can never in the nature of things occur again, at once pliant and resistant to them, into a great literary monument. To put Plato into his natural place, as a result from antecedent and contemporary movements of Greek speculation, of Greek life generally,—such is the proper aim of the historic, that is to say, of the really critical study of him.

III.

At the threshold, then, of the *Republic* of Plato, the historic spirit impresses upon us the fact that some of its leading thoughts are partly derivative from earlier thinkers, of whom we happen to possess independent information. From that brilliant and busy, yet so unconcerned, press of the early Greek life, one here, another there, stands aside to make the initial act of conscious philosophic reflection. It is done with something of the simplicity, the immediate and visible effectiveness, of the visible world in

action all around. Among Plato's many intellectual predecessors, on whom in recent years much attention has been bestowed by a host of commentators after the mind of Hegel, three emerge distinctly in close connection with the *Republic*, whose ideas, whose words even, we really find in the very texture of Plato's work: Pythagoras, the dim, half-legendary founder of the philosophy of number and music; Parmenides, "My father Parmenides," the centre of the school of Elea; Heraclitus, thirdly, author of the doctrine of "the Perpetual Flux": three teachers, it must be admitted after all, of whom what knowledge we have is to the utmost degree fragmentary and vague. But then, one way of giving that knowledge greater definiteness is by noting their direct and actual influence in Plato's writings.

Heraclitus, too, the first prose-writer of philosophy,—a philosophy, half poetic figure, half generalised fact, in style crabbed and obscure, yet stimulant, invasive, not to be forgotten—he too might be thought, as a prose-writer, one of the "fathers" of Plato. His influence on Plato, however, was by way of antagonism or reaction; Plato's stand against any philosophy of motion becoming, as we say, something of a "fixed idea" with him. Heraclitus of Ephesus (what Ephesus must have been just then is denoted by the fact that it was one of the twelve cities of the Ionian League), died about forty years before Plato was born. Here then at Ephesus, the much frequented centre of the religious life of Ionia, itself so lately emancipated from its tyrants, of ancient hereditary rank, an aristocrat by birth and temper, amid all the bustle of still undiscredited Greek democracy, he had reflected, not to his peace of mind, on the mutable character of political as well as of physical existence; perhaps, early as it was, on the mutability of intellectual systems also, that modes of thought and practice had already been in and out of fashion. Empires

certainly had lived and died around ; and here, in Ephesus as elsewhere, the privileged class had gone to the wall. In this era of unrestrained youthfulness, of Greek youthfulness, it is one of the haughtiest of that class, as being also of nature's aristocracy, and a man of powerful intellectual gifts, Heraclitus asserts the native liberty of thought at all events ; becomes, we might truly say, sickly with "the pale cast" of his metaphysical questioning. Amid the irreflective actors in that rapidly moving show, so entirely immersed in it, superficial as it is, that they have no feeling of themselves, he becomes self-conscious. He reflects ; and his reflection has the characteristic melancholy of youth when it is forced suddenly to bethink itself, and for a moment feels already old and the temperature of the world about it sensibly colder. Its very ingenuousness, its sincerity, will make the utterance of what comes to mind just then somewhat shrill or over-emphatic. Yet Heraclitus, thus superbly turning aside from the vulgar to think so early in the impetuous spring-tide of Greek history, does but reflect, after all, the superficial aspect of what actually surrounds him, when he cries out,—his philosophy was no matter of formal treatise or system, but of harsh, protesting cries—*Πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει*. There had been inquirers before him, of another sort, purely physical inquirers, whose bold, contradictory, seemingly impious guesses how and of what primary elements the world of visible things, the sun, the stars, the brutes, their own souls and bodies, had been composed, were themselves a part of the bold enterprise of that romantic age ; a series of intellectual adventures, of a piece with its adventures in unknown lands or upon the sea. The resultant intellectual chaos expressed the very spirit of gifted and sanguine but insubordinate youth (remember, that the word *νεότης*, *youth*, came to mean rashness, insolence), questioning, deciding, rejecting, on mere rags and

tatters of evidence, unbent to discipline, unmethodical, irresponsible. Those opinions, too, coming and going, those conjectures as to what underlay the sensible world, were themselves but fluid elements on the changing surface of existence. Surface, we say ; but was there really anything beneath it ? That was what to the majority of his hearers, his readers, Heraclitus, with an eye perhaps on practice, seemed to deny. Perpetual motion, alike in things and in men's thoughts about them ; the sad, self-conscious, philosophy of Heraclitus, like one, in that barely adolescent world, knowing beyond his years and so eager to instruct it, makes no pretence to be able to restrain that. Was not the very essence of thought itself also such perpetual motion ?—a baffling transition from the dead past, alive one moment since to a present, itself deceased in turn ere we can say, It is here ? A keen analyst of the facts of nature and mind, a master presumably of all the knowledge that then there was, a vigorous definer of thoughts, he does but refer the superficial movement of all persons and things around him to deeper and still more masterful currents of universal change, stealthily withdrawing the apparently solid earth itself from beneath one's feet. The principle of disintegration, the incoherency of fire or flood (for Heraclitus these are but lively figures of movements, subtler yet more wasteful than those obvious cosmic ones), are inherent in the primary elements alike of matter and of the soul. *Λέγει πον Ἡράκλειτος*, writes Aristotle, *ὅτι πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει*. But the principle of lapse of waste, was, in fact, in one's self ; *εἰμὲν τε καὶ οὐκ εἰμὲν*. "No one has ever passed twice over the same stream." Nay ! the passenger himself is without identity. Upon the same stream at the same moment we do, and do not, embark : for we are, and are not. And this rapid change, if it did not make all knowledge impossible, made it wholly relative, of a

kind (that is to say) valueless in the judgment of Plato; and "man," the individual, at this particular vanishing-point of time and place, "the measure of all things."

To know after what manner [says Socrates in the *Cratylus*, after discussing the question in what proportion names, fleeting names, contribute to our knowledge of things], to know after what manner we must be taught, or discover for ourselves, the things that really are (*τὰ ὄντα*) is perhaps beyond the measure of your powers and mine. We must even content ourselves with the admission of this, that, not from their names, but much rather themselves from themselves, they must be learned and looked for. . . . For consider, Cratylus!—a point I oftentimes dream on—whether or no we may affirm that what is beautiful and good in itself, and whatever is, respectively, in itself, *is* something? *Crat.* To me at least, Socrates, it seems to be something. *Soc.* Let us consider then, that in itself; not whether a face, or anything of that kind, is beautiful, and whether all these things seem to flow like water. But, what is beautiful in itself,—may we say?—has not this the qualities that define it always? *Crat.* It must be so. *Soc.* Can we then, if it is ever passing out below, predicate about it: first, that it *is* that; next, that it has this or that *quality*; or must it not be that, even as we speak, it should straightway become some *other* thing, and go out under on its way, and be no longer as it is? . . . Now, how could that which is never in the same state be a thing at all? Nor, in truth, could it be an object of knowledge to any one; for, even as he who shall know comes upon it, it would become another thing with other qualities; so that it would be no longer matter of knowledge what sort of a thing it is, or in what condition. Now, no form of knowing, methinks, has knowledge of that which it knows to be no-how. *Crat.* It is as you say. *Soc.* But if, Cratylus, all things change sides, and nothing stays, it is not fitting to say that there is any knowing at all. . . . And the consequence of this argument would be, that there is neither any one to know, nor anything to be known. If, on the other hand, there be that which knows, and that which is known; and if the Beautiful *is*, and the Good *is*, and each one of those things that really are, *is*, then, to my thinking, those things in no way resemble that moving stream of which we are now

speaking. Whether, then, these matters be thus, or in that other way as the followers of Heraclitus affirm and many besides, I fear may be no easy thing to search out. But certainly it is not like a sensible man committing one's self, and one's own soul, to the rule of names, to serve them, and, with faith in names and those who imposed them, as if one knew something thereby, to maintain, (damaging thus the character of that which is, and his own,) that there is no sound ring in any one of them, but that all, like earthen pots, let water.

IV.

Yet that there was another side to the doctrine of Heraclitus, we may understand from certain fragments which name already the eternal *Logos*; an attempt on his part, after all, to reduce that world of chaotic mutation to *Cosmos*, to the unity of a reasonable order, by the search for and the notation, if there be such, of an antiphonal rhythm, or logic; which, proceeding uniformly from movement to movement as in some intricate musical theme, might link together in one those contending, infinitely diverse impulses. It was an act of recognition, even on the part of a philosophy of the inconsecutive, the incoherent, the insane, of that Wisdom which, says the son of Sirach, "reacheth from end to end, sweetly and strongly ordering all things!" Yes! That musical spirit might be heard, though faintly, singing in the distant background. But if the Weeping Philosopher, the first of the pessimists, finds the ground of his melancholy in the sense of universal change, still more must he weep at the dulness of men's ears to that continuous strain of melody throughout it. In truth, what was sympathetic with the hour and the scene in the Heraclitean doctrine, was the boldly aggressive, the paradoxical and negative tendency there, in natural collusion, as it was, with the destructiveness of undisciplined youth; that sense of rapid dissolution, which, according to one's temperament and one's luck in things, might

extinguish, or kindle all the more eagerly, an interest in the mere phenomena of existence, of one's so hasty passage through the world.

The theory of the Perpetual Flux was indeed an apprehension of which the full scope was only to be realised by a later age, in alliance with a larger knowledge of the natural world, a closer observation of the phenomena of mind, than was possible, even for Heraclitus, at that early day. So, the seeds of almost all scientific ideas were dimly enfolded, it might seem, in the mind of antiquity; and fecundated, admitted to their full working prerogative, one by one in after ages by good favour of the special intellectual conditions belonging to a particular generation, which, on a sudden, finds itself preoccupied by a formula, not so much new, as renovated by new application. It is in this way that the most modern metaphysical, and the most modern empirical, philosophies, alike, have illustrated emphatically, justified, expanded, the divination (we may make bold to call it under the new light now thrown upon it) of the ancient theorist of Ephesus. The entire modern theory of "development," in all its various phases proved or unprovable, what is it but old Heracliteanism awake once more, in a new world and grown to full proportions? Πάντα χωρεῖ, πάντα ῥεῖ: it is the burden of Hegel on the one hand, to whom Nature, and art, and polity, and philosophy, ay! and religion too, each in its long historic series, are but so many conscious movements in the secular process of the eternal mind; and on the other hand of Darwin and Darwinism, for which, "type" itself, properly, *is* not, but is only always *becoming*. The bold paradox of Heraclitus is, in effect, repeated on all sides, as the vital persuasion, just now, of a cautiously-reasoned experience; and in illustration of the very law of change which it asserts, may itself presently be superseded as a commonplace. Think of all that subtly-disguised movement,

latens processus, Bacon calls it (again, as if by a kind of anticipation), which modern research has detected, measured, hopes to reduce to minuter, or ally to still larger, currents, in what had seemed most substantial to the naked eye, the inattentive mind! To the "observation and experiment" of the physical enquirer of to-day, the eye and the sun it lives by reveal themselves, after all, as Heraclitus had declared (scarcely serious, he seemed, to those around him), as literally in constant extinction and renewal; the sun only going out more gradually than the human eye; the system meanwhile of which it is the centre, in ceaseless movement nowhither. Our terrestrial planet is in constant increase by meteoric dust, moving to it through endless time out of infinite space. The Alps drift down the rivers into the plains, as still loftier mountains found their level there ages ago. The granite kernel of the earth, it is said, is ever changing in its very substance, its molecular constitution, by the passage through it of electric currents. And that Darwinian theory,—that "species," the identifying forms of animal and vegetable life, immutable though they seem, now as of old in the Garden of Eden are fashioned by slow development, while perhaps millions of years go by—well! every month is adding to its evidence. Nay, the idea of development,—that, too, a thing of growth, developed in the progress of reflection—is at last invading one by one, as the secret of their explanation, all the products of mind, the very mind itself, the abstract reason,—our certainty, for instance, that two and two make four. We have come gradually to think, or feel, that primary certitude. Political constitutions, again, as we now see so clearly, are not made, cannot be made, but grow. Races, laws, arts, have their origins and end, are themselves ripples only on the great river of organic life; and language is changing on our very lips.

V.

In Plato's day, the Heraclitean Flux, so deep down in Nature itself, —the flood, the fire—seemed to have laid hold on man, on the social and moral world, dissolving, or disintegrating, opinion, first principles, faith, establishing amorphism, so to call it, there also. All along, indeed, the genius, the good gifts of Greece to the world had had much to do with the mobility of its temperament. Only, when Plato came into potent contact with his countrymen (Pericles, Phidias, Socrates being now gone), in politics, in literature and art, in men's characters, the defect naturally incident to that fine quality had come to have unchecked sway. From the lifeless background of an unprogressive world, — Egypt, Syria, frozen Scythia — a world in which the unconscious social aggregate had been everything, the conscious individual, his capacity and rights, almost nothing, the Greek had stepped forth, like the young Prince in the fable, to set things going ; which, however, to the philosophic eye generally, about the time when the history of Thucydides leaves off, seemed to need a regulator ere the very wheels wore themselves out. Mobility !—we do not think that a necessarily undesirable condition of life, of mind, of the physical world about us. 'Tis the dead things, we may remind ourselves, that, after all, are most entirely at rest ; and might reasonably hold that motion (vicious, fallacious, infectious, motion, as Plato inclines to think) covers all that is best worth being. And as for philosophy, — mobility, versatility, the habit of thought that can most adequately follow the subtle movement of things, that, surely ! were the secret of wisdom, of the true knowledge of them. It means susceptibility, sympathetic intelligence, capacity, in short. It was the spirit of God that moved, moves still, in every form of real power, everywhere. Yet to Plato motion becomes the token of unreality in things, of falsity in our

thoughts about them. It is just this principle of mobility, that, with all his contriving care for the future, he desires to withstand. Everywhere he displays himself as an advocate of the immutable. *The Republic* is a proposal to establish that indefectibly in a very precisely-regulated, a very exclusive community, which shall be a refuge for elect souls from an ill-made world.

That four powerful influences made for the political unity of Greece was pointed out by Grote ; common blood, common language, a common religious centre, the great games in which all alike communicated. He adds that they failed to make the Greeks one people. Pan-hellenism was realised for the first time, and then but imperfectly, by Alexander the Great. The centrifugal tendency had ever been too much for the centripetal tendency in them, the progressive elements for the element of order. Their boundless impatience, that passion for novelty noted in them by Saint Paul, had been a matter of radical character. Their varied natural gifts did but concentrate themselves now and then to an effective centre, that they might be dissipated again, towards every side, in daring adventure alike of action and of thought. Variety and novelty of experience, further quickened by a consciousness trained to an equally nimble power of movement, individualism, the capacities, the claim, of the individual, forced into their utmost play by a ready sense and dexterous appliance of opportunity ; herein, certainly, lay at least one-half of their vocation in history. The material conformation of Greece, a land of islands and peninsulas, and broken up by repellent lines of mountain this way and that, nursing jealously a little township of three or four thousand souls into an independent type of its own, conspired to the same effect. Independence, local and personal, — it was the Greek ideal ! Yet of one side only of that ideal, as may be seen, of the still half-Asiatic, rather than the full Hellenic ideal, of the Ionian

ideal, as conceived by the Athenian people in particular, people of the coast who have the roaming thoughts of sailors, ever ready to float away anywhere amid their walls of wood. And for many of its admirers, certainly, the whole Greek people has been a people of the sea-coast. Lacedæmon, however, as Plato and others thought, hostile, inaccessible, in its mountain hollow where it had no need of any walls at all, there were resources for that discipline and order which constitute the other ingredient in a true Hellenism, the saving Dorian soul in it. Right away thither, to that solemn old mountain village, now mistress of Greece, he looks often, in depicting the perfect City, the ideal State. Perfection everywhere, we may conceive, is attainable only through a certain combination of opposites, Attic ἀλεια with the Doric ὄξος; and in the Athens of Plato's day, as he saw with acute prevision, those centrifugal forces had come to be ruinously in excess of the centripetal. Its rapid, empiric, constitutional changes, the subdivisions of parties there, the dominance of faction as we see it steadily increasing, breeding on itself, in the pages of Thucydides, justify Plato's long-drawn paradox that it is easier to wrestle against many than against one. The soul, moreover, the inward polity of the individual, was the theatre of a similar dissolution; and truly stability of character had never been a prominent feature in Greek life. Think of the end of Pausanias failing in his patriotism, of

Themistocles, of Miltiades, the saviours of Greece in a kind of consecrated age, actually selling the country they had so dearly bought to its old enemies. It is something in this way that, for Plato, motion and the philosophy of motion identify themselves with the vicious tendency in things and thought. Change is the irresistible law of our being, says the Philosophy of Motion. Change, he protests, through the power of a true philosophy, shall not be the law of our being; and it is curious to note the way in which, consciously or unconsciously, that philosophic purpose shapes his treatment, even in minute detail, of education, of art, of daily life, his very vocabulary, in which such pleasant or innocent words, as "manifold," "embroidered," "changeeful," become the synonymes of what is evil. He, first, notes something like a fixed cycle of political change; but conceives it (being change) as, from the first, backward towards decadence. The ideal city, again, will not be an art-less place; it is by irresistible influence of art, he means to shape men anew; by a severely monotonous art, however, such art as shall speak to youth, all day long from year to year, almost exclusively of the loins girded about.

Stimulus, or correction! One hardly knows which to ask for first, as more salutary for our own slumbersome, yet so self-willed northern temperaments. Perhaps all genuine fire, even the Heraclitean fire, has a power for both.

WALTER PATER.

AN OVER-ADMINISTERED NATION.

THE population of Germany consists of two classes: the people who make rules and regulations and the people who have to obey them. The first class comprises a number of officials respectfully, if vaguely, alluded to as *Die Verwaltung* (the Administration), and includes a great many persons from the sovereign down to the policeman; the second class embraces the rest of the population of Germany, —some fifty-three millions.

Englishmen travel fast, and travel mostly for pleasure; so that they hardly notice what becomes rather important if one stays long in any part of the country, the extent to which the Administration regulates the private life of the citizen. To take a simple instance, every one has observed the difficulty of getting the particular carriage and seat in a railway train that one may happen to want. Most of us are content to set this down as one of the little peculiarities of German officials which must be humoured or smoothed over. But at the bottom of this curious practice (as at the bottom of everything German) lies a theory. That theory is the direct opposite of what an Englishman would expect, and includes three propositions. (1) It is the guard's duty to open the door of the carriage. (2) He must only open it to a passenger travelling to one of the stations at which the carriage will stop. (3) Such a passenger must be provided with the proper ticket. These involve three corresponding duties on the passenger's part. (1) He must purchase the proper ticket. (2) He must wait on the platform till the guard assigns him a seat. (3) He must take that seat and stay there till he is let out. Thus railway travelling is not such a simple matter

as an Englishman is accustomed to think it. These rules are less rigidly insisted on if you are travelling by first-class; for that implies wealth, and you may be a person with whom it is as well, even for that great person the guard, to be on good terms. If you are travelling by any other class and you show in the slightest particular a disposition to flout the regulations you will feel the heavy hand of the Administration at once.

The hand of the Administration is heavy in Germany because it is guided by a strong head. This is best understood by a particular instance. The Kingdom of Saxony, to take an example, is divided into four *Kreishauptmannschaften*, and the head of each of these is appointed by the King. He corresponds directly with the Minister of the Interior (who is also appointed by the King), and is assisted by an elected council (*Kreisausschuss*), whose advice he is not obliged to take. He stands in a similar position to a Lord-Lieutenant with real administrative authority. Under him are various *Amtshauptmannschaften*, with a hierarchy of small officials under them, and as each *Amtshauptmann* hopes to be a *Kreishauptmann* some day, and each *Kreishauptmann* may aspire to be a Minister, it is clear that the chances of a factious opposition arising in any *Kreishauptmannschaft* are exceedingly small. If any one shows a turbulent spirit he knows that the Minister and the King are making a note of it, and that his behaviour will count against him if he should ever desire anything from the Administration. Be it said at once that in this particular case it happens that the King is a man of great ability in many directions, a man who would have made his mark

in any rank, and also a man of inexhaustible courtesy, kindheartedness and tact; an able and sagacious ruler in every respect.

Be it also said that the fondness of the German citizen for being looked after is such that what makes an Englishman most merry, seems to the German not only natural but agreeable. It is not, in fact, that the Germans put up with their Administration; they enjoy it.

It may be worth while then to note, in no unfriendly spirit, how much interference with the subject this powerful Administration thinks necessary in one or two directions. Everybody's railway experience is the same; but a step further on and most travellers note nothing more because it is not forced on their attention. Take a public garden. On the back of one seat may be read, "*Nicht draufstehen* (Do not stand on the seat)." On the back of the next, "*Nur für Erwachsene* (Only for grown-up people)." The use of the latter notice is twofold: it gives a self-important citizen a chance of turning out half-a-dozen children and taking the seat for himself, which is gratifying; and secondly it opens a fine field for administrative functionaries to consider whether a given occupant is grown up or not. A little further on we find, "*Hunde sind an kurzer Leine zu führen* (Dogs to be led in a short leash)"; *kurzer* being in spaced capitals. The enormity of having a dog in a long leash is not so clear as the discomfort to oneself in leading him. This last notice is a very good example of a class of notices forbidding things that one would not think of doing if they were not suggested.

A little further on comes "*Kein Einlass für Kinderwagen* (No perambulators allowed here)," which is good; and yet a little further, "*Spielplatz* (Playground)," which is thoughtful of the Administration, and here you will see not much except perambulators, nurses, and children. On a pump you will often see, "*Kein Trinkwasser, nur*

Nützwasser (This water is for general purposes, not for drinking)."

To sum up, you may sit on this bench but not on that; you may stand on this and not on the other; you may draw this water but you may not drink it; you may take your children here but not there, and you may take your dogs nowhere except in a *short* leash. Might not all this paint have been saved, even to the notice about the dogs, seeing that besides being led in a leash they have to be muzzled and registered in the Police Station?

One notice you do not see in a German public park, and that is, *Keep off the grass*. The reason for this is the same as led the Fathers to provide no punishment for parricide; it does not enter into the heads of the Administration that any one would be guilty of such an enormity. The parallel outrage in England would be if a man were to take an axe into Hyde Park and begin cutting down the trees. The one event which can move a German citizen to interfere, even by speech, with a province of the Administration is to see an Englishman walking on the grass.

In a piece of forest land laid out in walks near a health-resort I saw a number of boards suggesting various transgressions to my virgin mind, and among them the following very fierce notice:—"WARNUNG [in very large capitals]. *Das Rauchen aus offenen Tabakspfeifen oder von Cigarren sowie der Gebrauch hell brennender Anzündmittel am oder im Walde ausserhalb der öffentlichen Fahrwege ist bei Zwei Mark-Pf. Strafe, verboten.*" It was a very hot day, and this was the last notice that I came to. So I read it through twice, and, as the sense did not come quickly, I copied it down and retired to the shade to take off my hat and think it over. I think it means that you may smoke a pipe with a cover to it anywhere in the woods, but that you may only smoke open pipes and cigars, or strike matches, on the public paths. The reason is obvious and laudable; it is

to prevent the forest from being burnt down; but I was reminded of the notice that I saw in one of the comic papers some time since, alleged to have been discovered at the top of the Matterhorn: "Notice! This hill is dangerous to cyclists."

Outside the wood was a moderate slope down which the road wound to the river; the slope was perhaps as steep as St. James's Street. At the top was a notice, "*Radfahrer: Bergab absteigen* (Cyclists! get off going downhill)." How do German cyclists manage to stomach that?

But the most carefully administered of all German subjects is the traveller by tramway. The following are some only, perhaps one half, of the notices affecting the traffic in one single tram-car. (1) "Keep your ticket till the end of the journey to prevent its re-issue, and show it to the inspector when he requires it." (2) "Get out to the right." (3) "All chattering with passengers is strictly forbidden to the officials." (4) "Any one who gets out or in while the car is in motion does so at his own risk." (5) "Out of consideration for your fellow-passengers, please do not spit in the carriages." Even the Administration dare not put that in any other form than a request.

Let no man suppose that these minute regulations are to be disregarded; let him be equally slow to conclude that they are as ridiculous as they appear. They suit the people, and are in some respects an improvement on English ways. To mention one: the really admirable plan of making every cabman driving to the opera exact his fare before he starts. But they are undeniably inquisitorial; and a nation ought to be able to manage some of the simplest actions of life without so much help from its appointed officers. To take one or two miscellaneous examples: you cannot hire a cab at a railway-station without taking a ticket from the cab-inspector, and then you must hire the cab whose number corresponds with your ticket. You may not take

tickets at the opera except on the second day before, or else on the morning of the performance. You may not water plants on the window-sill lest they should fall over. You may not put milk in a beer-bottle lest you should poison yourself. This last regulation is very stringent indeed. I wanted some milk in a hurry the other day for a picnic, and the milkman said that unfortunately he had no bottles. Of the many dozen empty ones in the shop he flatly declined to fill a single one, alleging that they were not meant for milk. He pointed to the Administration's stamp on the stopper, which consecrated the bottle to beer for ever, and assured me that it could not be made worth his while to offend that silent witness. I marvelled, and went empty away. I have a profound admiration for Germany and all her works; but I hope it is no offence to the great Empire to say that in some of her dealings with her citizens she often reminds me of the immortal sketch in *Punch*, whereof the legend runs, "Go and see what baby is doing, and tell him not to."

The business controlled by the Administration may be generally described as everything in the country except the Army. The Army and the Administration practically divide the attention of the country; and the genuine importance of the Administration arising from the duties they have to perform is enhanced by the relative absence of other careers for talent. The Navy and the Colonial Office are (if one may venture to say so) as yet comparatively in their infancy, while the Bar and the Church do not take the same position in Germany as they do in England. On the other hand Medicine takes a position slightly better; but on the whole there remain only two really fine careers, the Army and the Administration.

The effect of all this on the German nature,—quite sufficiently prepared, in any case, to take itself seriously—may be imagined. No doubt the Administration is good, but the notion of his

own importance which is entertained by every one connected with it is exaggerated. You feel this very strongly if you have had anything to do with English offices. An Englishman, with rare exceptions, is a gentleman first and an official afterwards. He construes the rules which govern your application as favourably to you as possible, and gladly stretches a point if he can. If he is obliged to refuse you he shows you how his hands are tied, and perhaps suggests some other way by which you may attain part, at any rate, of your object. He does not carry himself as if he were administering you, and as if you ought to be grateful to him for the attention. Far different is your reception if your business lies a little off the lines of ordinary routine in Germany. Hardly have you framed your request when the answer comes back like the crack of a whip, "*Nein! das geht nicht* (No! that cannot be done)." You mumble excuses, which are acknowledged with a grand bow and a, "*Bitte sehr! Adieu!* (Don't mention it; good morning)"—courteous but unencouraging. In fact the grand difference resides herein; the English Administration, knowing itself to be human, does not pretend to perfection, and thinks it quite natural that a point might be raised now and again which it has not foreseen. On the other hand, the German Administration rather resents a suggestion that everything is not being done for you that you can reasonably want; and I think that is a sign that a country is over-administered.

The proper province of the Administration is a subject one might dispute on for ever. But it certainly does not include some injunctions that we have noticed. It is not necessary to put at a bridge-head, "Notice! keep to the right, and do not loiter on the pathways," because bodies of men always find it more comfortable to go one way

and come back the other. As for loitering, it is impossible if there are many people crossing, and if there are not it does not matter. It is not necessary that the State should put you into a railway-carriage; the State is sufficiently protected if it makes sure that you have taken your ticket. The carriage you travel in is a detail which concerns your comfort, and that you must necessarily understand better than the State. It is not necessary that the State should forbid a man to cycle downhill; it might as well forbid him to go out in the rain without an umbrella. Such regulations do nothing except swell the importance of the Administration.

If an Englishman comments unfavourably on the Administration he generally says, "Something ought to be done," and then does nothing. That is a sign, I think, that, on the whole, our Administration is weak; although, when we have made up our minds that a particular official must be strong, there is no limit to the extent we trust him. The policemen at Regent Circus, for example, are invested with, and daily exercise to the admiration of the world, a despotic and uncontrolled authority over the liberty of the subject which is not approached by any Continental official.

If a German comments unfavourably on the Administration he says with an irritated shrug, "Of course if you want anything you must do what you are told, but a sensible man cannot even understand half their nonsense." That, I think, is a sign that a country is being over-administered. Of the two states it is difficult to say which in the abstract is better; but an Englishman in Germany is by no means prepared to admit that his native country's state is the less gracious.

G. C.

THE OLD PLACE.

As a rule it seems a mistake to revert to the past until one has reached the time of life when exertion is weariness and one has grave qualms about the future. But there are exceptions to this rule. For instance, when some little while since I found myself within ten miles of the dear old place whence my family may be said to have proceeded, the temptation to dabble in reverie was irresistible. Further, I arranged to spend the night in the nearest country town, and to revisit the scenes of ancestral greatness in the morning.

It was a genial November day when I started upon my walk. There was still a glitter of gold on the elms and of bronze on the beeches; the scarlet of hips and haws contrasted garishly with the sober beauty of the russet hedgerow leafage. The sky was placid, with more cloud than blue about it. Wind there was none. Nature seemed half asleep even when the day was fully declared. The lazy croaking of some rooks was the only assertive sound in this mellow rural peace.

Not for twenty years had I set foot on the acres and lawns which once might have been called by that gracious term "paternal." In fact, however, I never had a chance of them. As the youngest son of the youngest son of the last squire, who was imprudent enough to bring seven sons into the world, it was not likely that the family place would come to me. But, for all that, the sentiment of the inheritance was strong within me. Had I not at my grandmother's knee heard many and many a tale of the rollicking life they lived there some threescore years back? Open house was the order of the day then, more's the pity for the sake of the family exchequer. They were devoted to sport, these good an-

cestors. It was either the deer or the fox, the partridges in the turnip-fields, the pheasants in the coverts, the gamecocks in the family cock-pit, or a bull to be baited in the village ring a mile away,—in one way or another the excitement of slaughter was ever to be had. And in the evening there was much drinking, as well as dancing and rather broad jesting. So the money went.

Alas! that I should have to say it; but the truth is my eldest uncle was a bit of a rogue. He did not maintain the family dignity as it behoved him. After his father's death, his brothers then being abroad in the world, he gambled away his inheritance until even the vicar of the village forbore to visit him, the entertainment that remained for his Reverence being so utterly at discord with the traditions of the place. By parcels the land went its way into other hands,—here a field, there a field,—so that at length all that was left was the homestead and two or three hundred adjacent acres. The gaunt old house, with its many windows, assumed a face of reproach. Wind and rain misused it, and were free so to do. The times were changed.

And then by and by my uncle died, and it was hoped that a worthier wearer of the name would resuscitate the family fortunes. But meanwhile Destiny had been weaving a pretty little cobweb. The naughty uncle had wedded his cook, and lo! the estate, or rather the mournful skeleton of it, passed into her fat hands. Nor was that the worst. Madam Cook had presented her lord and master with a hearty family of boys and girls, who had all been smuggled into existence, and brought up with remarkable regard for the eyes of a prying and censorious world. There was no entail,

and no doubt of the regularity of the marriage; the fatal knot had been tied in a town fifty miles away. And so the naughty uncle had continued to live a life of deceit, painfully heedless of the shock that his death would confer upon his blood relations.

This brings me to my last recollection of the poor old house. I was then a schoolboy,—or little better. It was a mystery to me that the cousins of the family mansion were held in so little esteem by my own branch, which yet made no claim to be either wealthy or braggartly patrician. I vowed that I would go over and see them for myself, and also that my gun should accompany me. For the tales of my grandmother, who was aged and held a pile of memories in the wallet of her mind, had stirred my brain, and I prefigured such success in the old fields and copses as even Sandringham could not do more than rival.

It was a revelation, however. I reached the place, and felt my stature increase by a cubit or so as I gazed at the many-windowed building with its stately trees, and the fair lawn up which the pheasants were wont to stalk in troops in the moonlight in the good old times of the past. But even while I was leaning against the iron gate (of Jacobean era), I was accosted by a voice that had a familiar sound in it. Goodness knows by what freak of atavism the thing came about; yet the man who owned the voice might, on the strength of its intonation alone, have been judged a descendant of my grandmother. He was in velveteens, with a short pipe in his mouth, and his nose was the reddest member of the kind I had seen for many a day. And the others, though with a difference, were like unto him. The dear cook-aunt was ill in bed, but she received me in state, propped up with embroidered pillows. She kissed me affectionately, and pressed a sovereign into my hand. We had not very much to say to each other, for I was so struck by her beard

and her large proportions that wonder held me mute. But afterwards she resolved herself in my mind into the most successful representative of the class to whom the aspirate is a stumbling-block. Poor dear soul! she was not without virtues; but the power of disciplining a family and influencing them for good was quite beyond her. Her sons were all drunken ne'er-dowells, and her daughters were empty-headed maidens, with what seemed to me a truly deplorable gift at squabbling with each other and lamenting before the world the viciousness of their brothers.

And so I departed somewhat disillusioned, and soon forgot the old place. The grandmother died, and with her snapped the strongest link that kept memory and interest attached to it. Now and then a funereal intimation came to remind us of the past. First died the aunt, then the sons one after the other (all of red noses, poor unfortunate fellows!), also two of the daughters, who found the damp and social stagnation quite too much for them. Other parts of the world got some chance of appreciation by the mapping-out of new lines of railway. But the old place was ever left in the lurch. The village church still kept its three-decker and a clerk; the stocks remained in the bit of a square in front of the parsonage; and the ring to which the baited bulls were tethered of old was as strong and fast in the vicarage wall as ever it had been.

Anon word came of the first sale of the old place. That was when land was worth money. The cousins did pretty well therefore, and with the proceeds they embarked for Canada, where they found husbands, and are now estimable mothers of large families. Afterwards, until the other day, all was blank. I had my work to do in the world; and it was work of a kind that did not license vain retrospect. I knew no more than the dead Adam what had befallen the old place.

I walked for three hours, up and down, among fields and through dainty little cuttings in the red rock, now and then passing a snug country-house whose earlier tenants had hobnobbed with my forefathers, but of whose actual occupants I knew nothing. The day held quiet and bright after the dim November fashion. Passers-by were few and far between. The nature of the landscape had probably changed not at all during the last hundred years. What was arable land then was arable land now; and gorse grew here and there in patches on the reddish banks just as of yore.

Then the church tower stole above the elms, and the mysterious sense of the homeland got fast hold of my heartstrings. Soon I was standing again at the iron gate of the poor old place. It was bitter to see it. The gate was fast with padlocks, and peeling from rust. The ruin of autumn was added to the natural ruin which had come upon it as the sequel to heaven knows how many years of desertion. Of the two towering poplar-trees (visible for ten miles) which of old had guarded the gate with some pretension, the one had had its crest blown asunder, and the other had been stripped so that it looked as dismal as a poodle after its first shearing. Grass and weeds ran riot to the threshold of the house and the gravel way was expunged.

I rang the bell, but it was long ere a slovenly woman came to answer it with a stare of suspicion. I might enter the garden if I liked, but not the house. The place was for sale,—had been so these five years. No one wanted it; the dilapidation had become so excessive. Did I not see the notice-board?

The board was lolling against a tree-trunk, as if weary of its futility. "Desirable family residence, contain-

ing &c., &c." The acreage had shrunk to a mere field or two, beyond the lawns and gardens. And what a mournful spectacle the gardens showed! Trees had fallen or half fallen, and in their course had ruined or half ruined other trees. Ivy and moss mantled the trunks; creepers matted tree to tree. The grass was knee-deep,—a sad, sickly, yellowish grass. I have had less labour to toil through a swamp-forest in Florida than to flounder about the lawn of the old place. The perfection of the ruin seemed reserved for the conservatories. Here not a whole pane of glass remained, and the nettles grew thick and high above the roof of the framework. A rabbit scurried out of the sheds at the sound of my stick upon the flags. It was the same everywhere. The outbuildings had fallen in, and grasses clothed the ruins. Desolation and decay reigned supreme.

I could not endure it for more than a few minutes. One glance into the large old drawing-room showed me a luxuriant brake of ivy which had stolen into the room through a window-frame. And so I turned my back. Once again outside I looked for the last time at the old house. Its expression seemed to be that of the extremest possible misery.

In the old church some measure of solace might be found, I had hoped, in storied urns and animated busts. But it would not do. Even the inscriptions seemed mendacious, with the memory of the ruin yonder fresh upon me. Outside I came upon the humbler monument to poor Madam Cook, which also commemorated her four children. Four eager goats plucked the herbage round the base of it!

And then I turned my back on it all, resolving henceforth to consider the past as a folly, and to sever my sympathy with it for ever.

A NOBLE LADY.

"I HAVE no wish for this freedom the decree grants." There was a ring of defiance in Marie de Lézeau's voice, as she uttered these words, which was in perfect keeping with the unconcealed scorn of the glance she cast on her interrogators. Did these men, forsooth, think she needed their protection?

It was the 2nd of September, 1790. Some fifty nuns were assembled in the great hall of the Convent of the Visitation at Rouen, to meet the commissioners who were come in the name of the authorities to invite them to cast aside their veils, and take their place as citizens in this glorious new world men were framing. There was something infinitely piteous in the way the nuns shrank back from the gaze of these intruders, whose very presence in their midst seemed to them a sacrilege. Feeble old women though many of them were, they all strove to comport themselves during this most grievous trial with a dignity befitting their birth and station. But struggle as they might, tears would force their way down their pale cheeks, while their long thin fingers worked convulsively, and from time to time a half-stifled sob was heard.

The commissioners were manifestly ill at ease. The position of would-be deliverers is a trying one at the best of times, and when the prisoners to be delivered persist in hugging their chains it becomes intolerable. They were kindly natured men enough in their way, and the utter helplessness of these women touched them. They tried to soften their rough voices as they explained that they were there not as foes, but as friends, and had only come to see that no obstacle was being put in the way of any sister who might wish to leave the convent

and take her share in the universal joy. The faint rumours of this "universal joy" which had reached the convent were hardly of a nature to tempt the timid, peace-loving sisters, and without exception they declined the invitation. The commissioners went their way marvelling greatly at the obstinacy of women, marvelling too, perhaps, that one of such striking appearance and undaunted bearing as "la femme Lézeau" should care to hide her gifts in a convent.

Although at that time thirty-four, Marie de Lézeau was in the prime of her splendid beauty, a beauty so remarkable that even fifteen years later it excited the admiration of the Empress Josephine's Court. She was tall, slight, and graceful, and her manner had a certain graciousness that was almost regal in its dignified repose. She was a member of one of the oldest families in Normandy, an ancestor of hers having come over with Rollo and settled there. St. François de Paule was also one of her relations. Although the Lézeaus had always steadily refused to follow the example of their neighbours and desert their native province for the Court, they had never become provincial, and Marie's father, the Baron d'Ecouche, was a man of considerable personal distinction. His wife unfortunately had one of those tempers which the French expressively denominate *difficile*; therefore, to make amends for her shortcomings, the Baron devoted himself personally to the education of his children, and up to the time of his death Marie had had no teacher but her father. She was hardly twelve years old then, but, as it soon became evident that she was much too high-spirited to be left under the care of her injudicious mother, she was sent to the Convent of the

Visitation at Rouen, where she remained until she was seventeen. When she returned home her relations at once set to work to arrange for her a suitable marriage; no difficult task, seeing she had a fortune. But the girl had a sharp wit of her own; she was clever too, and highly educated; she turned away with repugnance from the frivolous, artificial society into which her mother introduced her, and refused to marry any one of the various empty-headed young men who were in turn presented to her as possible husbands.

The life of a French girl in those days was not very exhilarating, and before long Marie de Lézeau rebelled against the utter inanity of her existence. For two years she accompanied her mother to innumerable entertainments, each one of which she found more wearisome than the other; then, in 1774, concluding with the rashness of youth that she had no taste for the world, she insisted upon entering as a novice the convent in which she had been educated. There, as she knew, she would find peace, and, what was of still greater importance to one of her nature, plenty of work, and work worth doing. She had a special gift for nursing, and in the convent, at her own request, was attached to the hospital, where her skilful treatment of those under her care, her indefatigable industry and unfailing good spirits, soon attracted attention. She easily won the love of those around her, for, in spite of her rather imposing appearance, she had one of the brightest and most lovable of natures. In later life she always spoke of the years she passed in the convent as a time of great happiness, and, as it happened, it was the only peaceful, uneventful time she was destined to know. The visit of the commissioners came upon her as a rude shock, and first awoke her to the fact that a storm was raging outside the convent walls. For two years longer, however, her life went on unchanged; it was not until 1792 that the more violent party obtained

the upper hand in Rouen. Then disaster followed disaster with startling rapidity. In September a furious mob attacked the convent, but failed to obtain an entrance. A few days later the municipal authorities sent for the plate, the sacred vessels, and anything else of value the nuns might possess. They were then forbidden to hold services in their chapel, and at last they themselves were ordered to leave the convent.

Thus, after an absence of eighteen years, Marie de Lézeau was forced to return to the world, and a strange sad world she found it. The old Château de Lézeau had been pillaged and burnt; the family estates were confiscated; most of her relations were in prison, or in exile; some of them had already perished on the scaffold. She and her mother sat waiting day after day, sure, each time they heard a footstep on the threshold, that their turn had come. Once the soldiers actually arrived to arrest the Baroness, but her daughter concealed her behind a curtain in a bedroom before she admitted them. They insisted upon searching the house, and, to her horror, when they entered the bedroom her mother's feet were visible below the curtain. For a moment she felt that all was lost; then, dexterously placing herself before the soldiers, she talked away to them so unconcernedly that they were convinced her mother could not be there, and left the house without further search. Evidently she had learned worldly wisdom since the time she had so scornfully repulsed the advances of the commissioners. Soon after this, having found a safe shelter for her mother in the country, she resolved to go to Paris, where she thought that she could more easily conceal herself than in Rouen. Just as she was leaving the house, however, she noticed there was a guard at the entrance. She hurried to the side door, only to find herself confronted by another soldier. She had a wholesome love of life, and once a prisoner there was no hope. Involuntarily she fixed her eyes on the man with a piteous

look of entreaty. He hesitated for a moment; his hand was already on her shoulder; then, whispering hurriedly, "Go and hide yourself, you are too pretty to be put in prison," he stood aside to let her pass. Within an hour she was on her way to Paris.

There she established herself in a little house in the Rue des Saints Pères, where an old *curé* from Rouen was living. Soon after her arrival two of her relations, the Marquis d'Ormesson and Vicomte Flers, were guillotined. But, undeterred by their fate, she set to work at once to help those who were even more unfortunate than herself. The suffering of the nobles in Paris was terrible. Hidden away in attics, which they did not dare to quit, were hundreds of men, women, and children, literally dying for want of bread. Madame de Lézeau,—she had assumed the title of a matron upon leaving the convent—had some money at her disposal, and, when things were at the worst, she used to pass her days in distributing food among people who would rather have died than have asked for charity. As a noble herself, and one who had suffered, they could accept from her as from a sister; and the brave hopeful words which accompanied her gifts were hardly less precious than the gifts themselves. All this time she was carrying, as it were, her life in her hand; and she knew it, for, as she walked along the streets, the very *gamins* used to call out that she was one of the hated nobles.

When peace and security were in some measure restored, she began another work. In the Tenth Arrondissement there was a municipal spinning-factory where from fifty to a hundred poor girls were provided with work. Madame de Lézeau discovered that during the Reign of Terror this charity had become thoroughly disorganised, she therefore volunteered to undertake the management of it, and to try to restore it to its former usefulness. Her offer was accepted, and thus her genius as an organiser first

became manifest. Up to this time she had never been called upon to take the initiative in concerted labour, and yet, without a moment's hesitation, she assumed the administration of affairs as quietly as if she had been regularly trained to it. It was a work for which she was admirably suited: one that called into play all the varied gifts of her nature, her infinite tenderness and sympathy as well as her business capacity; and in a very short time her influence was felt through the whole institution. Many of the girls under her care were of good family, though utterly destitute; most of them were orphans, and she devoted herself heart and soul to acting a mother's part to them.

There was one obstacle however in her path; she was a nun bound by the vows of her order. Was it not her duty to return to her convent so soon as it was re-opened? This was a question she had to face, and it was not without much heart-searching that she decided her first duty to be to her orphans. What would become of them if she left them? What work could she do in a convent so useful as this work she was doing in the world? She applied to the Pope for a dispensation from her vows. This was readily granted, for it was evident that she was deserting the convent for a harder and not for a more luxurious life.

Until 1806 she continued at the factory; it was then closed by the authorities because, owing to the war with England, it was impossible to supply it with raw cotton. Many of the girls were little more than children, and Madame de Lézeau was in despair at the thought of their being thus cast adrift at the most dangerous age. She tried to induce the municipality to change its decision, but in vain; then, declaring that she could not, and would not, allow fifty friendless girls to be turned into the streets, she announced her intention of opening a home for them herself. She took a house in Rue des Saints Pères

and spent what money she had in buying the necessary furniture. Her friends looked grave when they heard what she was doing, for all she could count upon was £240 a year, and what was that towards providing for fifty children? She only smiled, however, at their remonstrances, and gently accused them of lacking faith. On the morning of the very day the home was to be opened, she learned that her agent was a bankrupt; that the annuity which was to defray her daily expenses was lost; and that the twenty-five francs she had in her purse were all she possessed. And she had just undertaken to lodge, feed and clothe the fifty children!

It was a terrible day for Madame de Lézeau, but her courage never failed her. She welcomed the orphans when they arrived with warm motherly affection, and by no word or look revealed the keen anxiety she was suffering. It was not until they were all assembled around her in the evening, and she was reciting the grand old Litany of the Providence of God, that she gave any sign of emotion. Then, there was a ring of passionate entreaty in her voice as she appealed for help to "The Providence of God, refuge of the troubled, hope of the destitute, sure defence of the widow and the fatherless," which contrasted strangely with the bright hopeful tone of the children as they caught up the response, "Have mercy upon us." From the day she quitted the convent to her death, Madame de Lézeau's life was one long struggle, but never was she so near sinking beneath the burden of her care as on that night, when, with hardly enough money to provide them with food for the morrow, she first clearly realised that she, and she alone, stood between that little band of children and starvation or ruin. Fortunately the news of her distress had spread abroad, and the next day the money for a month's expenses was sent to her. Still for some time her anxiety was ceaseless, and she, with the two ladies who had joined her, were often forced

to work the whole night through to keep the grim wolf from the door. The orphans at first could give but little help, as spinning was the only thing they could do, and it was no easy task to teach them any other occupation. But they were never allowed to be idle; some hours in the day were set apart for lessons, others for housework, or for learning to sew and to make lace. When their work was done they were encouraged to play, and a hearty burst of laughter from the children in the midst of some noisy game could at any time drive the look of care from Madame de Lézeau's face. "We must make them happy now, you know," she used to say, "for they will have a hard life of it hereafter." Her children were to her as young recruits whom she must arm and fit to fight as good soldiers in the battle of life.

In Madame de Lézeau religious enthusiasm was, strange to say, combined with keen knowledge of the world. When her prospects were most gloomy, she firmly believed that help would be given to her; but her faith was not of the sort that stands idly waiting for miracles to be wrought on its behalf. She knew she must interest people in what she was doing if she wished for their aid. Accordingly she asked a number of gentlemen, leading ecclesiastics, soldiers and politicians, to form for her home a council of administration, which should examine her accounts and help her with advice. They consented, and were so delighted to find the institution entirely free from debt, that they gave it their warm support. She then appealed to the great ladies whom she knew to try to interest the Court in her orphans. By every instinct of her nature she was *Légitimiste*, but she was not the woman to allow her personal feelings to interfere with the welfare of her charges, and all parties were welcome at the home. Hortense Beauharnais made her way there one day, and was charmed with the stately directress who received her with all the ceremonious courtesy of the old *régime*. The Princess was

young and generous; the thought of this beautiful lady devoting her life to the service of the poor appealed to her imagination, and she became her warm friend. She and her husband, Louis Bonaparte, undertook to defray the expenses of eight orphans, and they persuaded the Empress to allow the institution to be placed under her special protection. The home soon became the fashion, and Madame de Lézéau's little parlour was thronged with distinguished visitors. Before a year had passed she was able, not only to increase the number of orphans she received, but also to develop another work she had much at heart, that of aiding those whom the Revolution had deprived of all means of support.

In 1808 she removed her orphanage to a larger house, and in the next year Napoleon gave orders that she should receive a regular subsidy from the State. As the home became more important, the difficulties with regard to its management increased. She was anxious to establish it upon a permanent footing, but who would carry on the work when she was gone? She was a devout Catholic, one who had always seen the best side of Catholicism, fortunately for her; therefore, naturally, her thoughts turned towards founding a religious community. By so doing she would not only remove all difficulty with regard to the care of the funds of the institution, but provide the orphanage with a regular order of trained teachers. After examining the rules of the different communities, she decided in favour of those of the Mother of God, an order of nuns which had been dissolved at the Revolution. With some trifling alterations she adopted these rules, together with the name of the old order, and applied for permission to establish a novitiate. This was obtained by the influence of Cardinal Fesch, Napoleon's uncle, who was a warm personal friend of Madame de Lézéau. In one particular she imitated Ignatius Loyola, for she sternly refused to admit into her

order any one who could not do something well. The teachers must have the gift of teaching; the sisters who were willing to cook, wash, or clean, must all give proof that they could do their work well. The interest of her orphans was the first thing to be considered.

The community was only just established in time. In 1810 Madame de Lézéau was summoned to the Tuileries, where General Duroc informed her that the Emperor had decided to establish six schools for the education of twelve hundred orphans of the members of the *Légion d'Honneur*, and that she was to be the directress of them. The teachers in the schools were to be the nuns of the order she had founded,—there were but six of them at that moment—and she was to be personally responsible for the houses and everything connected with the children. When Madame de Lézéau was asked to undertake this work, which would have taxed to the utmost the energy of a woman in the prime of life, she was already fifty-five: her strength too had been sorely tried during the previous ten years; and, owing to some internal disorder, she was rarely free from pain. Yet she never hesitated. She listened in silence while the General unfolded his plans, and then quietly replied that there was nothing impossible in the Emperor's project, and that she would gladly undertake to execute it. As General Duroc remarked, it was evident his master had at length found a workwoman after his own heart. The Imperial decree establishing the schools was published July 15th, 1810, and Madame de Lézéau set to work at once to make the necessary arrangements.

Napoleon was a hard taskmaster; no matter what obstacles stood in the way his orders must be executed to the minute. In September Madame de Lézéau was told to take possession of three houses, one in Paris, Rue Barquette, another in the forest of St. Germain, and the third at Fontaine-

bleau; she was to open the first, with the full complement of children, at once, and the others in the spring. These houses were little more than shells, needing papering, painting, and alterations of all kinds; and, with the best will in the world, she could not fill a house with children until the carpenters and painters were gone. Then there was the furnishing, which had to be done with the utmost care, for the Finance Minister was always at hand insisting upon rigid economy. In the midst of her work she had to find time to wait upon the Empress, receive the Princesses, write to Ministers, direct her orphanage as usual, watch over her novices, and arrange for increasing their number. It seems almost marvellous that her strength did not break down under the strain, particularly as all the time she was haunted by the fear that the authorities would not allow her to take her own orphans to the new homes, a point which indeed she did not carry without difficulty.

The orphanage in Paris was opened January 11th, 1811, and the one at St. Germain in the following April. Napoleon himself sent a sketch of the education he wished to be given there. It was the same as he had written three years before, in the midst of the war in Poland, for Madame Campan, and is a curious revelation of his views with regard to women. "I wish," he wrote, "these young girls to be trained in sentiments of real piety which will teach them the eternal resignation, the gentle and docile charity that religion alone can inspire. I desire that when they leave the orphanages of the Légion d'Honneur, they may be not merely pleasant women, but virtuous women; that their accomplishments may be of the heart rather than of the mind." He therefore recommended that they should be taught history and literature, but that they should be spared the study of the classics and the more difficult branches of learning: "I wish these girls to become useful women; and I am convinced that by

making them such, I shall make them attractive women too." And he never missed an opportunity of impressing upon Madame de Lézéau that it must be her first duty to render her charges profoundly religious.

The fourth orphanage was a magnificent old abbey at Pont-à-Mousson, a source of intense delight to the directress, who revelled in its stately beauty. Unfortunately the labour and anxiety involved by the necessary alterations proved the last straw, and before it was finished she was prostrate with a severe illness. While she was in bed, the Emperor, without a word of warning, paid a visit to the house at St. Germain, and insisted upon examining everything, even the saucepans. The result would have been disastrous if all had not been in perfect order, but his "*Tout est bien*," as he was leaving, if laconic, was emphatic; and a few days later he showed his approval by granting Madame de Lézéau a pension of 6,000 francs. Undoubtedly Madame de Lézéau thoroughly enjoyed her position as directress of the imperial orphanages; it gratified the old feudal instincts of her nature by enabling her to be of service to others. There was land attached to the houses in the country, and this entailed workmen and tenants, to whom she stood in the relation of a *châtelaine* with the attendant duties. Even in Paris she had quite a personal feeling for her tradesmen and those who worked for her, and in the country this was intensified. She interested herself in their families, helped them to arrange marriages, and never failed to visit them constantly if they were ill. Meanwhile her community was steadily increasing, for the work she personally had done was by this time so well known that ladies who wished for a serious occupation in life entered her order in preference to any other.

Just when things seemed most prosperous the glory of the Empire began to wane; ominous rumours of defeat were in the air, and soon it was known

that the Allied Army was marching on Paris. The orphanage at Fontainebleau had to be evacuated at a moment's notice to the sound of distant cannon. Madame de Lézeau hastened to St. Germain, where the danger was greatest, and soon after her arrival a regiment of Cossacks demanded admittance to the orphanage. Knowing that resistance was useless, she resolved to try what conciliation would do; she went out on to the lawn, and with a kindly dignity that was irresistibly attractive, told the Cossack colonel and his fierce, uncouth men that, if they would give her their word not to cross her threshold, they were welcome to stay in the garden, where she would consider them as guests. Her terms were accepted, and she herself at once distributed to them all the food she had. The next day, escorted by a division of Russian troops, she drove into the nearest town to purchase a further supply of provisions for her visitors. The Cossacks were immensely impressed by "the beautiful old lady," as they called her, and before leaving they came in a body to ask for her blessing. She gave one strong proof of her faith in them that mightily angered her old gardener. Two were invalids; she volunteered to lend them her little carriage to travel in. The whole community were sure she would never see it again; in three days, however, it was returned, with the hearty thanks of the regiment.

Soon the Bourbons were in power, and then Madame de Lézeau, staunch *Légitimiste* though she was, found herself regarded with suspicion. The new Government viewed Napoleonic institutions with little favour, and before long it began to be whispered that the orphanages of the *Légion d'Honneur* were to be closed. This was a terrible blow to Madame de Lézeau, and she felt that every effort must be made to prevent the execution of a project so unjust toward her orphans. She appealed to the Comte d'Artois, to Talleyrand, to every living being she could think of who had influence

at Court. In vain; on July 19th, 1814, a decree was issued suppressing the orphanages. She then offered to turn them into industrial schools if the Government would allow her to keep the houses; the only reply vouchsafed to her was an order to send the children off, and to send them quickly. Where she was to send them the Minister did not say, although he must have known that most of them had no home to go to. This was too much for her patience, and she told the Minister plainly that he might do and say what he pleased, but that she should keep with her such of the children as were friendless. In a private appeal to the King she set forth in terse emphatic language the injustice that he was sanctioning; and showed that, as a mere question of policy, the action of the Government was most ill-advised, for it was creating an untold amount of disaffection in the army, and thus alienating a part of the population it was most important to conciliate. The result proved that she was right. The soldiers grew furious at the treatment to which the children of their dead comrades were being subjected. Marshal Macdonald brought the subject before Parliament: the Ministers were denounced on all sides as the spoilers of the orphans; and the storm at length became so violent that the Government was glad to come to terms. Madame de Lézeau was informed that she might keep six hundred of the children at the expense of the State. In a few months, however, Napoleon was again in France, and all was confusion for no one knew what changes a day might bring forth.

No sooner was peace restored than the quarrels between the Archbishop of Paris and the Grand Aumônier of France caused endless trouble and inconvenience to Madame de Lézeau, whose order was under the jurisdiction of the two. That her ecclesiastical superiors should waste their time in frivolous disputes while there was so much work to be done in the world,

was to her, as she did not scruple to tell them, incomprehensible. Through all this time, however, she was busy in establishing the future of her order; she had seen too many changes in her time to be willing to leave it to the mercy of any Government. In 1824 she secured a house in Rue Picpus as the private property of the community, of which part was to be the headquarters of the nuns, and part a school for the poor in the neighbourhood. She seemed doomed, however, never to work for long in peace. In 1830 France was again in an uproar. The bigotry of Charles X. had rendered the religious orders most unpopular in Paris, and the fiercest battles were fought around convent doors.

A furious mob attacked the orphanage. Knowing that in a few moments the door would be forced, Madame de Lézeau opened it herself. She was seventy-five at that time, an old woman, one too whose days had been full of labour and trouble, but there was no sign of fear in her face or of weakness in her voice as standing there alone, in the front of that fierce crowd, she calmly asked why they beat so violently at her door. Drunk as many of the men were, they yet shrank back at her appearance; but one asked if arms were not hidden in the house. "There are no arms here," replied Madame de Lézeau in a clear, ringing voice that all could hear; "only little children, and you have too much honour to force an entrance into their refuge." "She has been a mother to our children," a rough-looking man called out; "don't go in." "Don't hurt the old lady," was now echoed on all sides; and the mob, moved by one of those impulses which none can explain, raised a hearty cheer for "the mother of the poor," and went its way. The next day she

started for St. Germain, always the post of danger. She went alone through Paris on foot, for the streets were barricaded; but, far from meeting with any molestation, it was leaning on the arm of a red-capped democrat that she made her way through the most dangerous quarter.

But brave, energetic woman as she was, the time was coming when her work must cease. During the cholera epidemic of 1832 it was noticed that she had become strangely fragile in appearance, and a few years later even her iron will could not prevent her face from being often convulsed with pain. It was then discovered that she had been suffering from cancer for years, and that, while playing her part as a bright, active worker in the world, she had been enduring agony such as few strong men could have borne. As soon as she knew the end was drawing near, she went in turn to each of the orphanages under her care, and examined them thoroughly to see that everything was in perfect order. This done she had a personal interview with every member of the community; and, assembling the children around her, gave to each one of them a few words of loving counsel. She then returned to Paris to die. Her suffering increased daily, but she still continued planning, organising, directing, until the very hour when the extreme unction was administered. That evening, however, when one of the nuns came to her as usual for orders, she said gently: "Child, do what you think best; decide for yourself; I am going to leave you now."

She died on the 28th December, 1838. One of the few personal wishes she had ever expressed was gratified for she died, as she had lived, *les armes à la main*.

THE LAND OF EVIL COUNSEL.

OF the three peninsulas in which the Morea terminates towards the south, the central is formed by a continuation of the lofty range of Taygetus, and ends abruptly in the bold headland of Matapan. This cape, under its ancient name of Tanaron, once gave a name to the whole promontory, which now, with a considerable district to the north of the actual peninsula, bears the name of Maina, or Mani among the Greeks, so called from a Frankish castle in the neighbourhood of the cape. The promontory itself consists of the barren mountain spine and a narrow table-land on the western side between the heights and cliffs which rise sheer from the sea. The modern province is divided into two *eparchies*, but the inhabitants still speak more familiarly of the three older divisions, Exo, Kato, and Mesa Mani. Outer Mani, the first division, includes the north-western portion from the Messenian border to the summits of Taygetus; Lower Mani, the whole eastern coast up to Gythion, the ancient port of Sparta; while Mesa, or inner Mani, is composed of the table-land on the western mountain slopes and the coast as far as Cape Matapan. This latter district is the cradle of a curious race, whose inaccessible mountains and inhospitable shores have hitherto been little visited, and whose barren rocks have for centuries borne the name of Kakoboulia Mani, the Land of Evil Counsel.

It has been claimed for the Mainotes that they descend directly from the Spartans of old; but it appears more probable that they are lineally connected, however remotely, with those provincials (*periæci*) of Laconia, offspring of the older Achæans, who had occupied the country before the Dorian invasion, and who were guaranteed by

the conquerors the enjoyment of their own property with considerable privileges which did not, however, extend to a voice in the civil or military government. For these provincials were still in occupation of the maritime districts, while such of the Spartans as then remained had their lands in the interior, at the time when the Roman conquest of the Peloponnese established the self-governing community of the Eleuthero-Laconians. In any case there can be no doubt that they are an unmixed and a very ancient race, differing in many characteristics from their neighbours; and if their haughty boast that their promontory has never submitted to an alien domination be a little proudly said, at any rate their history shows that the many invaders of the Morea have found it prudent to conciliate the dwellers in these inaccessible mountains, with exceptional immunities. Under the Turkish rule their condition resembled not a little that of the provincials under Sparta, while the rest of the Greeks were often in a position more akin to that of the Spartan Helot. The physical type is one of marked individuality, and their dialect, which closely resembles that of the Cretan Sfakiotes, abounds in Doric forms.

At a time when the rest of the Morea was cowed by the Slavonic invasion the Mainotes remained secluded in their mountains, isolated but unsubdued, and pagans until the end of the ninth century. The Franks, who possessed themselves of the rest of the country almost without a struggle after the Latin conquest of Constantinople, were aware of the difficulty of subjugating this portion of their dominions, and built the strong castle of Passava to control the northern passes

until they had established themselves more firmly. Later on they fortified another stronghold near the cape, and this castle of Maina (probably Magna) gave its name to the whole province. Such suzerainty as he could claim over the mountaineers was ceded by William Villehardouin, Prince of Achaia, with Mistra and all the south-eastern portion of the Morea, to the Emperor Michael VIII. in return for his liberation from captivity. They passed, with the rest of the peninsula, under the Ottoman dominion, but the tribute was always with difficulty collected from the men of Maina, and so little were they really subdued that they continued in constant league with the enemies of the Porte. When, therefore, Morosini expelled the Turks from the Morea, the Mainotes were among the first to join the standard of St. Mark, and in return for their services and alliance were granted by Venice an independent administration and freedom from taxation. It is probable that from the establishment of this constitution, and the consequent contentions of aspirants to office, are to be dated the village rivalries, the little civil wars, and the everlasting family feuds which survive there in the vendetta to this day. The Venetian star did not, however, remain long in the ascendant, and with the re-assertion of Turkish supremacy the Mainotes became once more a dependent, but a rebellious and never a servile race. They flew to arms again during the latter half of the last century, when Orloff's disastrous expedition landed in Greece, and finally they were among the staunchest warriors in the national cause when the Greek revolution at last broke out.

The condition of the Mainotes before the Greek revolution has been compared to that of the Scottish Highlanders up to the latter days of the Stuarts. They owed a nominal submission to the Sultan, paying, or more frequently omitting to pay, their tribute to the Capitan Pasha, under

whose control they were placed together with the Ægean Islands. The whole country was divided into eight hereditary *capitanliks*, the *capitani* being the heads of the principal families, who exercised a patriarchal control over the villages in their districts, which accounts for the more than feudal reverence entertained for their descendants to-day. The government was administered by a Bey, chosen by the various *capitani* and confirmed in his office by the Capitan Pasha. This position was held chiefly by three families, the Gligoraki, the Commondouros, and the Mavromichali. A representative of the latter family, the famous Petrobey, filled this office at the time of the Hellenic rising, when the Mainotes were the first to take the field, and succeeded in resisting to the last the attempts of Ibrahim to penetrate their mountain fastnesses. Such was their reputation at this time, and so great the influence of Petrobey, that Finlay, the historian of the Revolution, is of opinion that had his energy and ability been equal to his courage, he might have placed himself at the head of the movement and even become the prince of a new Greece. When peace was restored, however, the Mainotes were by no means prepared to yield their semi-independence for mere absorption in a Greek state, and they were soon at daggers drawn with the new Government. The injudicious and impolitic attitude of Count Capodistria to the Bey of Maina led to his assassination by Petro Mavromichali's two sons; and an attempt made a few years later to reduce the population to order by sending Bavarian troops, and pulling down the fortress towers in which the Mainotes had lived from time immemorial, proved equally unsuccessful. There was nothing for it but to conciliate this intractable region, and immunity from taxation, in return for their martial service, was accorded to a people which no government has yet quite succeeded in levelling down to uniformity with the rest of Greece,

and among whom it is powerless to suppress the vendetta.

The representatives of the feudal chiefs are still, far more than law or police, the real power in the land. In olden times there was no law but custom, and the arbitration of the captains was the only, if insufficient, tribunal. Still, at this day, when blood has been shed the slayer flies to the mountains and becomes an outlaw where no patrol will ever find him; his partisans or family will always know the place where he may be supplied with food and necessities, and eventually he will be smuggled off on to some small vessel, not to return till many years have passed and the stroke has been avenged. The victim's family will not denounce him to the law, but avenge the blow with blood for blood, on himself if possible, or on some member of his family. A red cross on the door marks the household where blood has been taken, and where blood is required in atonement. Sometimes a whole village is involved in such a death-feud against a neighbouring village, and the present representative of one of the chief Mainote families told me that he had himself been sent for in cases where the vendetta had assumed such serious proportions that all the people were shut up in their towers, bolted and barred, with a rifle at every loophole. In the presence of the chief hostilities were suspended, and it was sometimes possible to end the feud by a sort of family compact under which he who has last taken blood becomes the man of the household to which his victim belonged, is, as it were, adopted by them, and must serve their interests and fight their battles; such truces, if made, were most loyally observed. Of course these primitive and savage usages are gradually yielding to the march of progress, and the time cannot be far distant when the law will get the upper hand, but in Mesa Mani the whole population still occupy their towers as in the olden time. A village consists of a group of such towers; on

the lower floor will be the olive-press, above, the dwelling-room with its small windows guarded by screens of stone reaching more than half-way up. Sometimes the flat roof is also fortified with rude machicolations.

In the last century the inhabitants had a bad name for piracy and brigandage, and it is highly probable that, being for ever at feud with their masters for the time being, they were compelled to support themselves by such plunder as came in their way, for their promontory is extremely sterile. There is no water but what can be collected in cisterns during the rainy season, no trees, scarcely even any brushwood on the mountains, and all that will grow on the stony table-land are a few olives and fig-trees, a little thin grain and lupines, and even these are only produced by very laborious cultivation.

Colonel Leake, the illustrious topographer of Greece, found at Mistra a curious Romaic manuscript poem in which are described the court and character of Zanet Bey of the family of Gligoraki, who was appointed to office in 1795. The writer had evidently suffered at the hands of the inhabitants of the Land of Evil Counsel, for this is how he describes their mode of life:

There is not a spring of water in Inner Mani; its only harvest is beans and lean wheat; this the women reap and sow. The women collect the sheaves at the threshing-floor, winnow it with their hands, and thresh it with their feet, and thus their hands and feet are covered with a dry hard skin, as thick as the shell of a tortoise. Not a tree, or stick, or bough is to be found to cover the unfortunates with its shade, or to refresh the sight. At night they turn the handmill and weep, singing lamentations for the dead while they grind their wheat. In the morning they go forth with baskets into the hollows to collect dung to be dried for fuel; they collect it in the houses, and divide among the orphans and widows. All the men meantime rove about in the pursuit of piracy and robbery, or endeavouring to betray each other. One defends his tower against another, or pursues his

neighbour. One has a claim upon another, for a [murdered] brother, another for a son, another for a father, another for a nephew. Neighbour hates neighbour, *compère compère*, and brother brother. Whenever it happens that a ship, for its sins, is wrecked upon their coast, whether French, Spanish, English, Turkish or Muscovite, great or small, it matters not, each man immediately claims his share, and they even divide the planks among them.

The manuscript then goes on to describe how they behave if a stranger comes among them; they strip him bare and tell him then that he may go his way in safety and need fear no one. *Cantabit vacuus!*

In spite of these ancestral characteristics, no people observe the prescriptions of the Church with more exactness than the Mainotes. To quote once more from Colonel Leake, a Kakobouliote, "Who would make a merit of hiding himself behind the wall of a ruined chapel, for the purpose of avenging the loss of a relative upon some member of the offending family, would think it a crime to pass the same ruin, be it ever so small a fraction of the original building, without crossing himself seven or at least three times."

Now, however, whatever may be the character of the Kakobouliotes in their dealings with one another, and bad as their reputation seems to be with the rest of their countrymen, who even warned me against visiting their country, they have nothing but hospitality to show to those who come among them with a word of recommendation from one of the old feudal chiefs. Nevertheless very few travellers seem to have visited Maina of recent years, so far as I was able to learn from the inhabitants, and the land is unknown to the dragomen who conduct strangers through the highlands of Greece. It was therefore with unusual interest and anticipation that I set out one May morning, with the train of mules and ponies indispensable to travelling in Greece, from the cypress-fenced rose-garden of a

friend whose hospitable villa crowns a gentle height above the blue waters of the Laconian Gulf, armed with every recommendation from the grandson of the last Bey of Maina. The *agoyates*, or mule-drivers, were themselves Mainotes who knew every track in the country, and we decided to cross the mountains through a gap at the north of the promontory and so descend on Areopolis, which received this proud title in place of its ancient name of Tzimova, in honour of Petrobey whose home was here. The long line of Taygetus, hazy with morning, ran like a great wave southwards across the sea to Matapan, and the nearer spurs and transverse ranges were dark with forests of the vallonea oak, which yields as rich a harvest in this north-eastern division of Mani as the olive-groves do on the north-western side.

Leaving the road which skirts the sea, we entered the narrow lateral valleys by rough and climbing paths and before long came upon the typical Mainote houses, all built tower-wise like castle-keeps, and perched upon the tops of hills. Then the machicolations of the Frankish castle of Passava showed clear against the sky above the scrub and brushwood which has invaded its ruins. All trace of a path up to the height which it crowns is lost, and the ascent to it is toilsome enough; but for the sake of the beautiful and unfortunate Marguerite de Neuilly the pilgrimage was due, and indeed the castle is a very interesting one to explore. It was rather a town than a castle, built on the site of an ancient city, probably the Homeric Las, which served no doubt as the acropolis of a later city in the valley, where various remains of buildings hitherto unexplored are traceable. The circuit of the castle walls flanked with round towers is complete. They form an irregular oblong of which the longest side must be at least two hundred yards in length; on the eastern side the old foundations are visible on which the castle wall is constructed, formed of the huge irregular blocks

of the Pelasgian order of construction ; the gate is extremely narrow, a high tunnel through which only one horseman could pass at a time. Within the ramparts are remains of various buildings, and two large cisterns still collect water from the rains. One more pretentious ruin, with a spiral staircase of red sandstone, was perhaps the palace. All is overgrown with thick vegetation ; vallonea trees, lentisk bushes, wild sage, and arbutus choke the empty courts, and fill the gaps of desolation. The site is admirably chosen. It commands a view of the whole gulf between Malea and Matapan, and behind of the ways through the "black mountains" into Laconia, while the only passes from this side into Maina converge below its frowning wall.

The path ascending from the valley below Passava enters a fine gorge, cut by a torrent in whose bed, not yet quite dry, the oleanders made a splendid blaze of bloom ; the lowlier water willow was in full flower too, and here and there a plane tree rose above their sober foliage into bright fresh green, while up the rocks the yellow flowering sage grew four and five feet high. Beyond this gorge the country became much wilder, barren rock where only thyme and sage would grow, while the path was a mere track of loose and yielding stones. Then the rocks closed in once more ; two mighty bluffs, looking as though severed by an earthquake, reached sheer up into the clouds which a south-westerly wind was driving over them. Between these cliffs appeared the sea ; but the path instead of descending towards it turned south, climbing higher and higher up the vertical side of the great rocky shoulder. Evening was coming on and driving mists shut out the distance ; only faintly across the deepening cleft one could see the outlines of a Venetian castle on the high plateau beyond. This deep gorge marks the northern limit of Mesa Mani into the western table-land of which we were climbing. It was the stoniest

country I have ever seen, and yet infinite pains appeared to be taken to redeem the ungrateful land. The larger stones were collected and built into walls about four feet in height, and within these narrow compounds a thin wheat crop grew ; higher up again the larger stones were utilised for rough terraces which climbed the mountain like a stair. The white clouds rising from the sea gathered round us, pressing down upon the uncanny labyrinthine walls in the evening twilight, and thus, unable to gauge our whereabouts, or take in any general impression of the scene, blindfolded like the prisoners they brought in of old, we entered the land of the Kakobouliotes.

The cook had gone on before with his implements and the letters of recommendation, in consequence of which the whole population was waiting to receive us, where the towers of Areopolis clustered round the little church, and the doctor's house was placed at my disposal. The next morning the mist had disappeared, and it was possible to realise the situation. The village, with its fortalice cottages, straggled over a high table-land beneath a great square bluff of rock, the crest of which was lightly veiled with clouds. This table-land, which continues nearly the whole length of the promontory, might be about two miles in breadth between the sheer mountains and the precipitous cliffs which rise from the sea. Northwards a deep bay ran in towards the gap in the range through which we had passed, and across it on the further table-land was the village or town of Itylo, surmounted by a Venetian fortress. Above it rose bare rocks of pearly grey with beautiful variety of form, and the cliffs below thrust out a rosy headland running far into the deep blue sea. All round Areopolis were the same stone walls, dividing the whole table-land into little allotments, where thin wheat and lupines grew beneath stunted olives, varied by occasional groups of

fig and carob-bean trees. Terra-cotta coloured poppies and wild columbine thrived among the stones, where it seemed strange that anything should grow, for the appearance of the land was as though the rock surface had been broken up to sow with corn; genuine soil there was none. Where a young olive or fig was coming up a little sheltering wall was built round it as a protection from the destructive winds which sweep over the arid plateau, and, combined with the want of moisture, prevent the grain from swelling in the ear. The hardy lupine, called derisively the grape of Maina, flourishes, and provides the poorer people with a coarse kind of bread; and the wild lupine divides the mountain slopes with abundant thyme which makes the honey of Tænaron to rival that of Hymettus. Areopolis contains about a thousand souls. The people are passionately attached to their rocks; but those that have been elsewhere in search of work, as, for instance, to the mines of Laurium, come back discontented with the old hard life, and do not care to remain. The genuine natives have never seen a cart, for, as my host explained, in consideration of their immunity from taxation the government does nothing for Maina, and consequently there are no roads. Traditions of the old Corsair days remain; and one old fellow told me a story of a Mainote pirate ship which was captured off this coast by an English frigate under a Captain Hamilton, but subsequently released upon a solemn declaration from the crew never again to attack a British vessel.

That day I rode along the table-land southwards through a marvellous air, the sunlight tempered with the sea-breeze which gathered up the scent of the thyme. Beneath were a series of blue creeks, fit settings for Conrad's anchorage and Medora's tower; above, the fortress villages among the broken boulders of coarse marble and limestone. The first village on the track was Charia, a little group of about a

dozen towers. Issuing hence two men came towards us with guns on their shoulders and pistols in their belts, who recognised a relative in one of the *agoyates* and embraced him. In answer to our inquiry why they were armed, one of them explained that the other had been engaged to marry a girl at Areopolis, but had thrown her over, whereupon a family quarrel had ensued, and now one had been killed on either side; they therefore only ventured out in pairs fully armed for protection and if occasion served for attack. As a fact nearly all the men we met were carrying arms.

Everything is stone in this country. The beehives are constructed of flat stones, and the children play games with black and white pebbles on a smooth slab scratched with squares like a fox-and-geese board. The pains with which cultivation is enforced on the rocks is worthy of all praise; sometimes even the solid limestone is broken up and hollowed out with small pits, in which a little red marl is collected for an olive or a fig to grow. The prickly pear seems to flourish in the stones, but the wheat must literally be gathered stalk by stalk. The wild lupines of the mountain furnish food for pigs; but what a diminutive race of sheep can find for pasture it is difficult to say. There are wolves and foxes in the upper ranges, and partridges and turtle-doves are common in season, while near the cape thousands and thousands of quails are intercepted in their passage north. The water, stored in the cisterns from rain and snow, is thick and muddy, but apparently not unwholesome; at any rate there is no other. Fuel there is none but the thyme-roots from the mountains, which the women laboriously collect and bring down from a considerable distance on the backs of donkeys.

The people are not especially prepossessing in appearance, but there is a refined look in the women's faces, clean-cut delicate features, nothing heavy or obtuse. The men are spare

and active, dark in complexion and hair though not excessively so; they wear the beard, which does not grow very thick; the nose is prominent, the forehead high and vertical, the head rather narrow, the face generally somewhat deeply modelled with a tendency to hollowness of the cheek. The few men who still keep to the national dress wear the baggy blue breeches gathered in below the knee, which the Greek islander affects rather than the white kilt universal on the mainland; but owing to the poverty of the country, costume has been generally abandoned and the rags of European dress have taken its place. The women wear a broad scarlet stripe round the skirt, which they take off for two years as a sign of mourning for a relative. My guide observed suggestively that there were few of these red stripes in Maina. The condition of the people does not appear to have improved much since Colonel Leake visited the country in the early part of the century; hunger and thirst ever at the door, and premature old age; the song of lamentation for some murdered relative sung by the women as they work the hand-mill at night; and the observation of the village headman who conducted him: "If they had not given such precise orders concerning you, how nicely we should have stripped you of all your baggage!"

Some four or five hours' ride from Areopolis is a little monastery near the towers of Gita, where I was glad to halt after the long stumbling and slipping on the loose stones and boulders of the path, over which the Mainote children run barefoot with perfect unconcern. The solitary monk who occupied it came from the great establishment of Megaspelion in the north of the Morea, and was very anxious to detain us for the night; but it was too early in the day, and I agreed to return and spend the following evening with him. Near this the coast throws out a great mass of rock into the sea, with a plateau on the top of somewhat higher elevation than the ground we

were travelling on, Capo, or Kavo, Grosso. At the conjunction of this peninsula and the mainland there is a long narrow isthmus connecting a flat area of rock, which thus runs out somewhat in the shape of a spoon. Upon the rock are remains of a Franko-Venetian castle, and my *agoyate* informed me that as many as three hundred and eighty wells, or cisterns, sunk in the limestone had been counted there. The northern bay formed by this projection is called the harbour of Mezapó, and some topographers identify the site with the Homeric Messa, "abounding in pigeons"; a happy epithet, if it were indeed the ancient site, for the caverns around Capo Grosso are full of blue-rocks, but Colonel Leake's opinion is adverse and his topographical instinct was seldom at fault. Some way further on we came upon traces of an ancient rock-cut road lined with deep ruts, which probably connected Mezapó with the ancient Tænaron.

In a little group of towers which we passed through the women were singing *myrologies*, or dirges for the dead. An old woman had died, and all the female inhabitants of the neighbouring towers had come together to the number of seventy or eighty and were gathered round the square pile, sitting on the ground or upon stones, and chanting to a wild, monotonous air. In northern Greece these death-songs are often improvised, and sometimes contain much poetic suggestion and beauty of simple thought, in the messages entrusted to the dead to bear. The Mainote songs are seldom improvised; they have a character of their own, savage and passionate and fierce, without much grace of form or expression. One of them ran:

Wife of Ligorou, Paraaké,
When you get to the world below,
Should you see our kinsfolk there,
Tell them the tower is taken;
It was Babouloyanni took it,
And the deacon Dikaiakas,
The bastard of Katsibarda,
And the children of Stelia.

The singing of these dirges continues

here for three days after death, and is resumed on the ninth and on the fortieth day. It was a strange picture, the group of ragged women, many of them with babies at the breast, squatting round the tower of silence, and singing to their monotonous measure the grim old songs in which the passions of life are blended with the pagan dream of death.

It was weary work as evening drew on riding over the paths which alternated between loose stones like sea-shingle with jagged blocks or tracks of polished limestone; but our camping-ground was not distant on the far side of Capo Grosso. We descended by what appeared to be a torrent-bed, a space of hopeless irredeemable rock, like some torture-circle of the *Inferno*, to a beautiful little creek under the southern shadow of the promontory. A couple of brigs and five or six *caiques* lay at anchor and about a dozen houses clustered round the shore. Geroliméni, "the ancient harbour," was its name, and an old water conduit, recently unearthed in digging foundations, testified to its antiquity. The setting sun made all the mountains rosy to the point of Matapan, and gilded the scudding clouds that flitted over their tops; the shadows deepened their purple, and the sea took the hue which in this land reveals why Homer spoke of the "wine-dark waves." The perfect peace of the evening light possessed this far-off end of the world, and very restful sounded the lapping of the ripple at the water's edge after the long hot ride through the May sun and the eternal rattle and clatter of the stones.

The house in which my letters procured me hospitality was a big warehouse, occupying a little headland. Below were sacks of wheat and other imported stores, and barrels of oil, which the anchored brigs were to take away. Above was a big empty area, where the quail-merchants are housed in the season of the flight, when the live birds are caught here in hundreds of thousands and sent off upon steamers to feed the great stomach of northern

Europe. In one corner Janni, the cook, was already at work upon a *pilaff* and a quarter of lamb; in another the night's lodging was prepared. Such luxuries as glass in the windows are unknown in this part of Maina, and the ill-fitting board shutters were but a poor substitute, so that this chamber became like a temple of Æolus with the sharp wind which blew down the gorge.

The journey south to Alyka, on the following day, began through a more hopeless wilderness of stone than any we had traversed; but suddenly the rock formation changed from marble and limestone to the more friable slate, and over the detritus terraces of wheat were carried up nearly to the crest of the mountain, dotted about on which appeared villages of towers, looking from far off like feudal castles on the vantage ground. About half an hour's ride beyond Alyka the path descends into a torrent-bed ending in a little creek, the northern boundary of a rocky peninsula, a mile or so in circumference, which was formerly the site, or at any rate the acropolis of Tænaron, the chief city of the Eleuthero-Laconian confederation. This is established by inscriptions on the door-posts of a ruined chapel on the height, built with the stones of an ancient temple. To the south is a larger bay, round which, and straggling up the valley, is the modern village of Kyparisso.

Near the creek, under the acropolis, was a shady cavern with a beach of its own, only to be reached by wading, and thus secured from interruption for breakfast and a bath. The rocks were full of glorious colour here, rich ochres and madders, against which the sea told intensely blue, with marvellous colours of ruby and amethyst where the ripples played over the shallows round fallen boulders and floating weed. On the cliff overhead, above the cavern's mouth, a bird was singing with all its might. It seemed as though the beauty of it all, the joy of the world, touched directly on some

chord in the bird which returned the same note in the quick response of song.

About a mile further is the village of Vathia, where Colonel Leake was told in the early part of the century that a hundred men had perished in family feuds within a space of forty years; and some four miles beyond, the narrow isthmus connecting the great mass of rock which forms Cape Matapan, a circular peninsula some seven miles round. On the west side of the isthmus is a dangerous creek surrounded with steep cliffs, on the east the securer harbour of Porto Kaio, lying under the fortress of Maina, and named after the quails which it exports. Towards the point is a half-ruined church, identified by Colonel Leake as occupying the site of the temple of Poseidon, built on this the southernmost point of Greece, and near it is the cavern which was of old the fabled gate of hell, the *Tenarii fauces* through which Hercules was said to have dragged up the hound Cerberus. Of this tradition, however, Pausanias, for once, expresses his scepticism. Nevertheless the superstition lingers in Maina that the devil from time to time issues from that cavern in the shape of a big black dog.

The cook and the baggage-mules had returned to the monastery from Geroliméni, but it was sunset before we reached it by a less circuitous path than our morning's route. Though known as the Monastéri, it was in reality too small for the dignity of such a name, consisting of the chapel, two upper rooms, and an out-house, all inclosed in a little court. The monk, our host, was Hegoumenos, or abbot and community together; an intelligent man in his way, though he had quite lost touch of the world during the ten years he had spent in this isolation. As he joined us over dinner he discoursed on men and things. The fault of his countrymen was that they were too much addicted to politics; the object of their politics was place, and place meant eating,

drinking, and doing nothing. The Mainotes were less ardent as politicians; they were too ignorant, and never read newspapers. He had a paper sent him sometimes, and when he had read both sides of the question in the rival prints, his usual reflection was that all journalists were liars and scoundrels and all politicians humbugs, — a most intelligent man, the Hegoumenos! In the hollows of the mountains which appeared so bleak above us, there was, he said, better land, but the mountain people were good for nothing. Here they were savage enough, but hard-working, living on the lupines which they grow and a little wheat, and obtaining the other necessaries of life from the sale of their surplus olives, but seldom seeing money. His own little cell, with a table and three or four stools, was their standard of comfort, and their highest luxury a little resinous wine which he distributed among the folk who came to his church on Sundays. They cared nought for the Government and its doings: they paid it no taxes, and expected nothing from it; and when they were called upon to vote they generally consulted him.

That evening has sunk deep into my memory. We sat upon the roof by the chapel bell-tower, in this remote, strange land, the most southerly point of Europe, among this primeval folk, looking through the embers of sunset across to Africa and the unknown lands. We all grew silent under the spell as we sat and smoked together. A little red of the after-glow hung on very late in the west; behind us the mountains rose in a strong black mass, running northwards like a broken wave; before us the dim table-land sloped gently towards the sea; and one by one the stars hung their lamps in the darkling sky.

The next day was Sunday. A number of peasants had collected from far and near, and were sitting on the chapel steps or grouped about the court. The family of one of my mule-drivers, hearing of his advent, had

come down to see him, and half-a-dozen of them escorted us some miles on our return journey. We took a higher road this time, passing through the villages on the lower slopes. There is absolute similarity between these villages of Mesa Mani ; always the same square towers of rude stone masonry with a lower building sometimes attached, or groups of towers linked together to form the more imposing residences of the old *capitani*. To each house belongs a cistern just outside the village, and a round threshing-floor of hardened earth. The paths between the stone walls cross and recross, wind up and down, and without a guide it would be hopeless to find the way. Numerous little stone chapels line the road at intervals, and there are not a few pretty little Byzantine churches, always partially or wholly in ruin, with fragments of fresco still adhering to the falling apse. The general aspect is one of slow decay.

Our way back lay through another and a loftier pass which issues eventually, converging towards the valley through which we started, below the castle of Passava. We were mounting the side of the great rock behind Areopolis. Here there was little or no attempt at cultivation ; huge boulders shaped like fossil monsters of the primeval world, or the sea-flock of Amphitrite, lay prone on the mountain side, and between them wild pinks and poppies, love-in-a-mist, campanula, sage, and a host of other wild flowers grew at their own sweet will. Above, in the hollow of the pass, the land seemed richer and the crops less thin, and we skirted a considerable village with headless gowned statues built into its walls. Then climbing up the northern side, and laboriously reaching the crest over a dangerous path, the double view broke upon us. The western or Messenian waters were still in sight, a triangle of blue through

the gorge we had traversed, while eastward the Laconian Gulf spread wide beneath our feet. The eastern coast of the promontory of Maina ran down in sharp perspective, walls of grey pearly rock, abrupt to the water's edge. At the further side Cape Malea was plainly visible, but Cerigo was a mere outline in the haze. Far south the rugged mass of Matapan floated rosy on the bluest of seas, whose horizon was misty with summer under a cloudless heaven. Below, for foreground, the castellated village of Skutari crowned a crest of hill dominating its little bay, and northwards the highest summits of Taygetus rose grandly over the lesser ranges, their hollows filled with snow.

After a breakneck descent on foot over a giddy zigzag path, we found a spring of mountain water in a shady hollow, and halted for mid-day. Then, after another hour's stumbling over rocks and boulders, we reached fresh green vegetation once more, vallonea oaks shading patches of fern leading on into a fairy valley, where a little stream wound its way through groves of mulberry and cypress. Pleasant it was to leave that bare and stony wilderness behind, and enter the meadows scented with water-willow and alive with the song of nightingales !

Below the slopes of Passava, as evening drew on, we encountered our host from Gythion, who with true Greek hospitality had ridden out to meet us. But night had fallen before we reached that rose-garden among the cypress trees, where the lamb roasted whole upon the six-foot spit was waiting ready, together with a pile of fresh lettuces and many bottles of a certain precious liquid, amber-coloured, undefiled by resin and gypsum, pressed from a Tuscan grape which grows to perfection on these kindred shores.

RENNELL RODD.

LORD BEAUPREY.

PART II.

III.

I KNOW not whether it was this danger,—that of seeming unnatural—that weighed with Mary Gosselin; at any rate when the day arrived she had decided to take her share of Lord Beauprey's hospitality. On perceiving that the house, when with her companions she reached it, was full of visitors, she consoled herself with the sense that such a share would be small. She even wondered whether its smallness might not be caused in some degree by the sufficiently startling presence, in this stronghold of the single life, of Maud Ashbury and her mother. It was true that during the Saturday evening she never saw their host address an observation to them; but she was struck, as she had been struck before, with the girl's cold and magnificent beauty. It was very well to say she had faded; she was still handsomer than any one else. She had failed in everything she had tried; the campaign undertaken with so much energy against young Raddle had been conspicuously disastrous. Young Raddle had married his grandmother, or a person who might have filled such an office, and Maud was a year older, a year more disappointed, and a year more ridiculous. Nevertheless one could not believe that a creature with such advantages would always fail, though indeed the poor girl was stupid enough to be a warning. Perhaps it would be at Bosco, or with the master of Bosco, that fate had appointed her to succeed. Except Mary herself she was the only young unmarried woman on the scene, and Mary glowed with the generous sense of not being a competitor. She felt as much out of the question as the blooming wives, the heavy matrons, who formed the rest of the female

contingent. Before the evening was over, however, her host, who, she saw, was delightful in his own house, mentioned to her that he had a couple of guests who had not been invited.

"Not invited?"

"They drove up to my door as they might have done to an inn. They asked for rooms and complained of those that were given them. Don't pretend not to know who they are."

"Do you mean the Ashburys? How amusing!"

"Don't laugh; it freezes my blood."

"Do you really mean you're afraid of them?"

"I tremble like a leaf. Some monstrous ineluctable fate seems to look at me out of their eyes."

"That's because you secretly admire Maud. How can you help it? She's extremely good-looking, and if you get rid of her mother she'll become a very nice girl."

"It's an adious thing, no doubt, to say about a young person under one's own roof, but I don't think I ever saw any one who happened to please me less," said Guy Firminger. "I don't know why I don't turn them out even now."

Mary persisted in sarcasm. "Perhaps you can make her have a worse time by letting her stay."

"Please don't laugh," her interlocutor repeated. "Such a fact as I have mentioned to you seems to me to speak volumes,—to show you what my life is."

"Oh, your life, your life!" Mary Gosselin murmured, with her mocking note.

"Don't you agree that, at such a rate, it may easily become impossible?"

"Many people would change with you. I don't see what there is for you to do but to bear your cross!"

"That's easy talk!" Lord Beauprey sighed.

"Especially from me, do you mean? How do you know I don't bear mine?"

"Yours?" he asked vaguely.

"How do you know that *I'm* not persecuted, that *my* footsteps are not dogged, that *my* life isn't a burden?"

They were walking in the old gardens, the proprietor of which, at this, stopped short. "Do you mean by fellows who want to marry you?"

His tone produced on his companion's part an irrepressible peal of hilarity; but she walked on as she exclaimed: "You speak as if there couldn't be such madmen!"

"Of course such a charming girl must be bored too," Guy Firminger conceded, as he overtook her.

"I don't speak of it; I keep quiet about it."

"You realise then, at any rate, that it's all horrid when you don't like them."

"I suffer in silence, because I know there are worse tribulations. It seems to me you ought to remember that," the girl continued. "Your cross is small compared with your crown. You've everything in the world that most people most desire, and I'm bound to say I think your life is made very comfortable for you. If you're oppressed by the quantity of interest and affection you inspire, you ought simply to make up your mind to bear up and be cheerful under it."

Lord Beauprey received this admonition with perfect good humour; he professed himself able to do it full justice. He remarked that he would gladly give up some of his material advantages to be a little less badgered, and that he had been quite content with his former obscurity. No doubt, however, such annoyances were the essential drawbacks of ponderous promotions; one had to pay for everything. Mary was quite right to rebuke him; her own attitude, as a young woman much admired, was a lesson to his irritability. She cut this apprecia-

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tion short, speaking of something else; but a few minutes later he broke out irrelevantly: "Why, if you are hunted as well as I, that dodge I proposed to you would be just the thing for us *both*!" He had evidently been thinking it out.

Mary Gosselin was silent at first; she only paused, gradually, in their walk at a point where four long alleys met. In the centre of the circle, on a massive pedestal, rose in marble a florid, complicated image, so that the place made a charming old-world picture. The grounds of Bosco were stately without stiffness and full of artistic character. The girl had told her mother, in London, that she disliked this fine residence, but she now looked round her with a vague pleased sigh, holding up her glass (she had been condemned to wear one, with a long handle, since she was fifteen) to consider the weather-stained garden group. "What a dear old place!" she musingly exclaimed.

"Wouldn't it, really, be just the thing?" Lord Beauprey went on, with the eagerness of his idea.

"Wouldn't what be just the thing?"

"Why, the defensive alliance we've already talked of. You wanted to know the good it would do *you*. Now you see the good it would do *you*!"

"I don't like practical jokes," said Mary. "The remedy's worse than the disease," she added; and she began to follow one of the paths that took the direction of the house.

Poor Lord Beauprey was absurdly in love with his invention; he had all an inventor's importunity. He kept up his attempt to place his "dodge" in a favourable light, in spite of a further objection from his companion, who assured him that it was one of those contrivances which break down, in practice, in just the proportion in which they make a figure in theory. At last she said: "I was not sincere just now when I told you I'm worried. I'm *not* worried!"

"They *don't* make up to you?" Guy Firminger asked.

She hesitated an instant. "They make up to me; but at bottom it's flattering and I don't mind it. Now please drop the subject."

He dropped the subject, though not without congratulating her on the fact that, unlike his infirm self, she could keep her head and her temper. His infirmity found a trap laid for it before they had proceeded twenty yards, as was proved by his sudden exclamation of horror, "Good heavens, —there's Lottie!"

Mary perceived, in effect, in the distance a female figure coming towards them over a stretch of lawn, and she simultaneously saw, as a gentleman passed from behind a clump of shrubbery, that it was not unattended. She recognised Charlotte Firminger, and she also recognised the gentleman. She was moved to further mirth by the dismay expressed by poor Firminger, but she was able to articulate, "Walking with Mr. Brown."

Lord Beauprey stopped again before they were joined by the pair. "Does he make up to you?"

"Mercy, what questions you ask!" his companion exclaimed.

"Does he,—*please*?" the young man repeated, with odd intensity.

Mary looked at him an instant; she was puzzled by the deep annoyance that had flushed through the essential good-humour of his face. Then she saw that this annoyance apparently had exclusive reference to poor Charlotte; so that it left her free to reply, with another laugh: "Well, yes,—he does. But you know I like it!"

"I don't, then!" Before she could have asked him, even had she wished to, in what manner such a circumstance concerned him, he added, with his droll agitation: "I never invited *her*, either! Don't let her get at me!"

"What can I do?" Mary demanded as the others advanced.

"Please take her away; keep her yourself! I'll take the American, I'll

keep *him*," he murmured, inconsequently, as a bribe.

"But I don't object to him."

"Do you like him so much?"

"Very much indeed," the girl replied.

The reply was perhaps lost upon her interlocutor, whose eye now fixed itself gloomily on the dauntless Charlotte. As Miss Firminger came nearer he exclaimed, almost loud enough for her to hear, "I think I shall kill her some day!"

Mary Gosselin's first impression had been that, in his panic, under the empire of that fixed idea to which he confessed himself subject, he attributed to his kinswoman machinations and aggressions of which she was incapable; an impression that might have been confirmed by this young lady's decorous placidity, her passionless eyes, her expressionless cheeks and colourless tones. She was plain, yet she was usual; she was not what people called in books intense. But after Mary, to oblige their host, had tried, successfully enough, to be crafty, had drawn her on to stroll a little in advance of the two gentlemen, she became promptly aware, by the mystical operation of propinquity, that Miss Firminger was indeed full of design, of a purpose single, simple, and strong, which gave her the effect of a person carrying with a stiff, steady hand, with eyes fixed and lips compressed, a cup charged to the brim. She had driven over to lunch, driven from somewhere in the neighbourhood; she had picked up some silly woman as an escort. Mary, though she knew the neighbourhood, failed to recognise her base of operations, and, as Charlotte was not specific, ended by suspecting that, far from being entertained by friends, she had put up at an inn and hired a fly. This suspicion startled her; it gave her for the first time something of the measure of the situation, and she wondered what would be the end of the high pressure of which Guy Firminger complained. Charlotte, on arriving, had gone

through a part of the house in quest of its master (the servants being unable to tell her where he was), and she had finally come upon Mr. Boston-Brown, who was looking at old books in the library. He had placed himself at her service, as if he had been trained immediately to recognise, in such a case, his duty, and informing her that he believed Lord Beauprey to be in the grounds, had come out with her to help to find him. Lottie Firminger questioned her companion about this accommodating person; she suggested that he was odd but nice. Mary mentioned to her that Lord Beauprey thought highly of him; she believed they were going somewhere together. At this Miss Firminger turned round to look for them, but they had already disappeared, and the girl became ominously dumb.

Mary wondered afterwards what profit she could hope to derive from such proceedings; they struck her own sense, naturally, as disreputable and desperate. She was equally unable to discover the compensation they offered, in another variety, to poor Maud Ashbury, whom Lord Beauprey, the greater part of the day, neglected as conscientiously as he neglected his cousin. She asked herself if he could be accused of rudeness, and answered, somewhat sententiously, that the extravagance of such behaviour relieved him from the obligation of courtesy. He got rid of Charlotte, somehow, after tea; she had to fall back to her mysterious lines. Mary knew this effort would have been detestable to him,—he hated to force his nature; she was sorry for him and wished to lose sight of him. She wished not to be mixed up even indirectly with his tribulations, and the fevered faces of the Ashburys were particularly dreadful to her. She spent as much of the long summer afternoon as possible out of the house, which indeed, on such an occasion, emptied itself of most of its inmates. Mary Gosselin asked her brother to join her in a devious ramble; she might have had other society, but

she was in a mood to prefer his. These two were extremely fond, and they had been separated so long that they had arrears of talk to make up. They had been at Bosco more than once, and though Hugh Gosselin said that the land of the free (which he had assured his sister was even more enslaved than dear old England) made one forget there were such spots on earth, they both remembered, a couple of miles away, a little ancient church to which the walk across the fields would be charming. They talked of many things as they went, and among them they talked of Mr. Boston-Brown, in regard to whom Hugh, as scantily addicted to enthusiasm as to bursts of song (he was determined not to be taken in) became, in commendation, almost lyrical. Mary asked what he had done with his paragon, and he replied that he believed him to have gone out stealthily to sketch: they might come across him. He was extraordinarily clever at water-colours, but haunted with the fear that the public practice of such an art on Sunday was viewed with disfavour in England. Mary exclaimed that this was the respectable fact, and when her brother ridiculed the idea she told him that she had already noticed he had lost all sense of things at home, so that Mr. Boston-Brown was apparently a better Englishman than he. "He is indeed,—he's awfully artificial," Hugh replied; but it must be added that in spite of this drawback their American friend, when they reached the goal of their walk, was to be perceived in an irregular attitude in the very churchyard. He was perched on an old flat tomb, with a box of colours beside him and a sketch half completed. Hugh remarked that this amusement was the only thing that Mr. Boston-Brown really cared about, but the young man protested against the imputation in the face of an achievement so modest. He showed his sketch to Mary, however, and it consoled her for not having kept up her own experiments; she never could do any-

thing like that. He had found a lovely bit on the other side of the hill, a bit he should like to come back to, and he offered to show it to his friends. They were on the point of starting with him to look at it when Hugh Gosselin, taking out his watch, remembered the hour at which he had promised to be at the house again to give his mother, who wanted a little mild exercise, his arm. His sister, at this, said she would go back with him; but Boston-Brown interposed an earnest inquiry. Mightn't she let Hugh keep his appointment and let *him* take her over the hill and bring her home?

"Happy thought,—*do that!*" said Hugh, with a crudity that showed the girl how completely he had lost his English sense. He perceived, however, in an instant, that she was embarrassed, whereupon he went on: "My dear child, I've walked with girls so often in America that we really ought to let poor Brown walk with one in England." I know not whether it was the effect of this plea or that of some further eloquence of their friend; at any rate Mary Gosselin, in the course of another minute, had accepted the accident of Hugh's secession, had seen him depart with an injunction to her to render it clear to poor Brown that he had made quite a monstrous request. As she went over the hill with her companion she reflected that since she had granted the request it was not in her interest to do this. She wondered, moreover, whether her brother had wished to throw them together; it suddenly occurred to her that the whole incident might have been prearranged. The idea made her a little angry with Hugh; it led her, however, to entertain no resentment against the other party (if party Mr. Brown had been) to the transaction. He told her all the delight that certain sweet old corners of rural England excited in his mind, and she liked him more than she had liked him yet.

Hugh Gosselin, meanwhile, at Bosco, strolling on the terrace with his

mother, who preferred small walks and had had much to say to him about his extraordinary indiscretion, repeated over and over (it ended by irritating her) that as he himself had been out for hours with American girls it was only fair to let their friend have a turn with an English one.

"Pay as much as you like, but don't pay with your sister!" Mrs. Gosselin replied; while Hugh submitted that it was just his sister who was required to make the payment *his*. She turned this logic to easy scorn, and she waited on the terrace till she had seen the two explorers reappear. When the ladies went to dress for dinner she expressed to her daughter her extreme disapproval of such conduct, and Mary did nothing more to justify herself than to exclaim, at first, "Poor dear man!" and then to say, "I was afraid you wouldn't like it." There were reservations in her silence that made Mrs. Gosselin uneasy, and she was glad that at dinner Mr. Boston-Brown had to take in Mrs. Ashbury; it served him right. This arrangement had in Mrs. Gosselin's eyes the added merit of serving Mrs. Ashbury right. She was more uneasy than ever when, after dinner, in the drawing-room, she saw Mary sit for a period on the same small sofa with the culpable American. This young couple leaned back together familiarly, and their conversation had the air of being desultory without being in the least difficult. At last she quitted her place and went over to the defiant pair; she said to Mr. Boston-Brown that she wanted him to come and talk a bit to *her*. She conducted him to another part of the room, which was vast and animated by scattered groups, and held him there, very persuasively, quite maternally, till the approach of the hour at which the ladies would judiciously disperse. She made him talk about America, though he wanted to talk about England, and she judged that she gave him an impression of the kindest attention, though she was really thinking, in alternation, much more of three

very interesting things than of what he might have to say. One of these things was a circumstance of which she had become conscious only just after sitting down with him,—the prolonged absence of Lord Beauprey from the drawing-room; the second was the absence, equally marked (to her imagination), of Maud Ashbury; the third was a matter different altogether. "England gives one such a sense of immemorial continuity, something that drops like a plummet-line into the past," said the young American, ingeniously exerting himself, while Mrs. Gosselin, rigidly contemporary, strayed into deserts of conjecture. Had the fact that their host was out of the room any connection with the fact that the most beautiful, even though the most suicidal, of his satellites had quitted it? Yet if poor Guy was taking a turn by starlight on the terrace with the misguided girl, what had he done with his resentment at her invasion and by what inspiration of despair had Maud achieved such a triumph? The good lady studied Mrs. Ashbury's face across the room; she decided that triumph, accompanied perhaps with a shade of nervousness, looked out of her insincere eyes. An intelligent consciousness of ridicule was at any rate less present in them than ever. While Mrs. Gosselin was occupied in watching such disparities one of the doors opened to readmit Lord Beauprey, who struck her as pale and who immediately approached Mrs. Ashbury with a remark evidently intended for herself alone. It led this lady to rise with a movement of alarm and, after a question or two, to leave the room. Lord Beauprey left it again in her company. Mr. Boston-Brown had also noticed the incident; his conversation languished, and he asked Mrs. Gosselin if she supposed anything had happened. She turned it over a moment and then she said: "Yes, something will have happened to Miss Ashbury."

"What do you suppose? Is she ill?"

"I don't know; we shall see. They're capable of anything."

"Capable of anything?"

"I've guessed it,—she wants to have a grievance."

"A grievance?" Mr. Boston-Brown was mystified.

"Of course you don't understand; how should you? Moreover it doesn't signify. But I'm so vexed with them (he's a very old friend of ours), that really, though I dare say I'm indiscreet, I can't speak civilly of them."

"Miss Ashbury's a wonderful type," said the young American.

This remark appeared to irritate his companion. "I see perfectly what has happened; she has made a scene."

"A scene?" Mr. Boston-Brown was terribly out of it.

"She has tried to be injured,—to provoke him, I mean, to some act of impatience, to some failure of temper, of courtesy. She has asked him if he wishes her to leave the house at midnight, and he may have answered—But no, he wouldn't!" Mrs. Gosselin suppressed her supposition.

"How you read it! She looks so quiet."

"Her mother has coached her, and (I won't pretend to say *exactly* what has happened), they've done, somehow, what they wanted; they've got him to do something to them that he'll have to make up for."

"What ingenuity!" the young man laughed.

"It often answers."

"Will it in this case?"

Mrs. Gosselin was silent a moment. "It *may*."

"Really, you think?"

"I mean it might if it weren't for something else."

"I'm too judicious to ask what that is."

"I'll tell you when we're back in town," said Mrs. Gosselin, getting up.

Lord Beauprey was restored to them, and the ladies prepared to withdraw. Before she went to bed Mrs. Gosselin asked him if there had been anything

the matter with Maud; to which he replied with an inscrutable countenance (she had never seen him wear just that face) that he was afraid Miss Ashbury was ill. She proved, in fact, in the morning, too unwell to return to London: a piece of news communicated to Mrs. Gosselin at breakfast.

"She'll have to stay; I can't turn her out of the house," said Guy Firringer.

"Very well; let her stay her fill!"

"I wish you would stay too," the young man went on.

"Do you mean to nurse her?"

"No, her mother must do that. I mean to keep me company."

"You? You're not going up?"

"I think I'd better wait over to-day, or long enough to see what's the matter."

"Don't you *know* what's the matter?"

He was silent a moment. "I may have been nasty last night."

"You have compunctions? You're too good-natured."

"I dare say I was rough. It will look better for me to stop over twenty-four hours."

Mrs. Gosselin fixed her eyes on a distant object. "Let no one ever say you're selfish."

"Does any one ever say it?"

"You're too generous, you're too soft, you're too foolish. But if it will give you any pleasure Mary and I will wait till to-morrow."

"And Hugh, too, won't he, and Boston-Brown?"

"Hugh will do as he pleases. But don't keep the American."

"Why not? He's all right."

"That's just why I want him to go," said Mrs. Gosselin, who could treat a matter with candour, just as she could treat it with humour, at the right moment.

The party at Bosco broke up and there was a general retreat to town. Hugh Gosselin pleaded pressing business, he accompanied the young American to London. His mother and sister came back on the morrow,

and Boston-Brown went in to see them, as he often did, at tea-time. He found Mrs. Gosselin alone in the drawing-room, and she took such a convenient occasion to mention to him, what she had withheld on the eve of their departure from Bosco, the reason why poor Maud Ashbury's fantastic assault on the master of that property would be vain. He was greatly surprised, the more so that Hugh hadn't told him. Mrs. Gosselin replied that Hugh didn't know; she had not seen him all day and it had only just come out. Hugh's friend, at any rate, was deeply interested, and his interest took for several minutes the form of intense silence. At last Mrs. Gosselin heard a sound below, on which she said, quickly: "That's Hugh,—I'll tell him now!" She left the room with the request that their visitor would wait for Mary, who would be down in a moment. During the instants that he spent alone the visitor wandered in rather a dazed, confused way to the window, and stood there with his hands in his pockets, staring vacantly into Chester Street; then, turning away, he gave himself, with an odd ejaculation, an impatient shake which had the effect of enabling him to meet Mary Gosselin composedly enough when she came in. It took her mother, apparently, some time to communicate the news to Hugh, so that Boston-Brown had a considerable margin for nervousness and hesitation before he could say to the girl, abruptly, but with an attempt at a voice properly gay: "You must let me very heartily congratulate you!"

Mary stared. "On what?"

"On your engagement."

"My engagement?"

"To Lord Beauprey."

Mary Gosselin looked strange; she coloured. "Who told you I'm engaged?"

"Your mother, just now."

"Oh!" the girl exclaimed, turning away. She went and rang the bell for fresh tea, rang it with noticeable

violence. But she said "Thank you very much!" before the servant came.

IV.

BOSTON-BROWN did something that evening towards disseminating the news: he told it to the first people he met, socially, after leaving Chester Street; and this although he had to do himself a certain violence in speaking. He would have preferred to hold his peace; therefore if he forced his inclination it was for an urgent purpose. This purpose was to prove to himself that he didn't mind. A perfect indifference could be, for him, the only result of any understanding Mary Gosselin might arrive at with any one, and he wanted to be more and more conscious of his indifference. He was aware indeed that it required demonstration, and this was why he was almost feverishly active. He could mentally concede, at least, that he had been surprised, for he had suspected nothing at Bosco. When a fellow was attentive in America every one knew it, and, judged by this standard, Lord Beauprey had had no appearance whatever: how otherwise should *he* have achieved that sweet accompanied ramble? Everything, at any rate, was lucid now, except perhaps a certain strangeness in Hugh Gosselin, who, in coming into the drawing-room with his mother, had looked flushed and grave and had stayed only long enough to kiss Mary and go out again. There had been nothing effusive in the scene; but then there was nothing effusive in any English scene. This helped to explain why Miss Gosselin had been so blank during the minutes she spent with him before her mother came back.

He himself wanted to cultivate tranquillity, and he felt that he did so, the next day, in not going again to Chester Street. He went instead to the British Museum, where he sat quite like an elderly gentleman, with his hands crossed on the top of his stick and his eyes fixed on an Assyrian

bull. When he came away, however, it was with the resolution to move briskly; so that he walked westward the whole length of Oxford Street and arrived at the Marble Arch. He stared for some minutes at this monument, as in the national collection he had stared at even less intelligible ones; then, brushing away the apprehension that he should meet two persons riding together, he passed into the park with the certainty that he didn't care whom he met. He got upon the grass and made his way to the southern district, and when he reached the Row he dropped into a chair, rather tired, to watch the capering procession of riders. He watched it with rather a lustreless eye, for what he seemed mainly to extract from it was a vivification of his disappointment. He had had a hope that he should not be forced to leave London without inducing Mary Gosselin to ride with him; but that prospect failed, for what he had accomplished in the British Museum was the determination to go to Paris. He tried to think of the attractions supposed to be evoked by that name, and while he was so engaged he recognised that a gentleman on horseback, close to the barrier of the Row, was making a sign to him. The gentleman was Lord Beauprey, who had pulled up his horse and whose sign the young American lost no time in obeying. He went forward to speak to his late host, but during the instant of the transit he was able both to observe that Mary Gosselin was not in sight and to ask himself why she was not. She rode with her brother; why then didn't she ride with her future husband? It was singular, at such a moment, to see her future husband disporting himself alone. This personage conversed a few moments with Boston-Brown, said it was too hot to ride, but that he ought to be mounted (*he* would give him a mount if he liked); and was on the point of turning away when his interlocutor succumbed to the temptation to put his modesty to the test.

"Good-bye, but let me congratulate you first," said Boston-Brown.

"Congratulate me? On what?" His look, his tone, were very much what Mary Gosselin's had been.

"Why, on your engagement. Haven't you heard of it?"

Lord Beauprey stared a moment, while his horse shifted uneasily. Then he laughed and said: "Which of them do you mean?"

"There's only one I know anything about. To Miss Gosselin," Brown added, after a puzzled pause.

"Oh yes, I see,—thanks so much!" With this, letting his horse go, Lord Beauprey broke off, while Boston-Brown stood looking after him and saying to himself that perhaps he didn't know. The chapter of English oddities was long.

But on the morrow the announcement was in *The Morning Post*, and that surely made it authentic. It was doubtless only superficially singular that Guy Firminger should have found himself unable to achieve a call in Chester Street until this journal had been for several hours in circulation. He appeared there just before luncheon, and the first person who received him was Mrs. Gosselin. He had always liked her and always thought her, in her noiseless, lurking way (quite apart from affection, for one didn't necessarily love people for their ability), one of the cleverest women he had met; but he was, on this occasion, more than ever struck with her good-humoured acuteness, her independent wisdom.

"I knew what you wanted, I knew what you needed, I knew the subject on which you had pressed her," the good lady said; "and after Sunday I found myself really haunted with your dangers. There was danger in the air at Bosco, in your own defended house; it seemed to me too monstrous. I said to myself, 'We *can* help him, poor dear, and we *must*. It's the least one can do for so old and so good a friend.' I decided what to do; I simply put this other story about.

In London news travels fast. I knew that Mary pitied you, really, as much as I do, and that what she saw at Bosco had been a kind of revelation,—had, at any rate, brought your situation home to her. Yet of course she would be shy about saying out, for herself: 'Here I am,—I'll do what you want.' The thing was for me to say it *for* her; so I said it first to that chattering American. He repeated it to several others, and there you are! I just forced her hand a little, but it's all right. All she has to do is not to contradict it. It won't be any trouble and you'll be comfortable. That will be our reward!" smiled Mrs. Gosselin.

"Yes, all she has to do is not to contradict it," Lord Beauprey replied, musing a moment. "It won't be any trouble," he added, "and I *hope* I shall be comfortable." He thanked Mrs. Gosselin formally and liberally, and expressed all his impatience to assure Mary herself of his deep obligation to her; upon which his hostess promised to send her daughter to him on the instant; she would go and call her, so that they might be alone. Before Mrs. Gosselin left him, however, she touched on one or two points that had their little importance. Guy Firminger had asked for Hugh, but Hugh had gone to the City, and his mother mentioned, candidly, that he didn't like the arrangement. She even disclosed his reason; he thought there was a want of dignity in it. Lord Beauprey stared at this and, after a moment, exclaimed: "Dignity? Dignity be hanged! One must save one's life!"

"Yes, but one mustn't always save the life of another: that's what poor Hugh seems to think. But do you know what I said to him?" Mrs. Gosselin continued.

"Something very clever, I've no doubt."

"That if *we* were drowning you'd be the very first to jump in. And we may fall overboard yet!" Fidgeting there with his hands in his pockets,

Lord Beauprey gave a laugh at this, but assured her that there was nothing in the world for which they mightn't count upon him. None the less she just permitted herself another warning, a warning, it is true, that was in his own interest, a reminder of a peril that he ought beforehand to look in the face. Wasn't there always the chance, —just the bare chance—that a girl in Mary's position would, in the event, decline to let him off, decline to release him even on the day he should wish to marry? She wasn't speaking of Mary, but there were of course girls who would play him that trick. Guy Firminger considered this contingency; then he declared that it wasn't a question of 'girls,' it was simply a question of Mary. If *she* should wish to hold him, so much the better; he would do anything in the world that she wanted. "Don't let us speak of such vulgarities; but I had it on my conscience!" Mrs. Goselin terminated.

She left him, but at the end of three minutes Mary came in, and the first thing she said was: "Before you speak a word, please understand this, that it's wholly mamma's doing. I hadn't dreamed of it, but she suddenly began to tell people."

"It was charming of her, and it's charming of you!" the visitor cried.

"It's not charming of any one, I think," said Mary Goselin, looking at the carpet. "It's simply idiotic."

"Oh, I say! It will be tremendous fun."

"I've only consented because mamma says we owe it to you," the girl went on.

"Never mind your reason,—the end justifies the means. I can never thank you enough nor tell you what a weight it lifts off my shoulders. Do you know I feel the difference already? —a peace that passeth understanding!" Mary replied that this was childish; how could such a feeble fiction last? At the very best it could live but an hour, and then he would be no better off than before. It

would bristle moreover with difficulties and absurdities; it would be so much more trouble than it was worth. She reminded him that so ridiculous a service had never been asked of any girl, and at this he seemed a little struck; he said: "Ah, well, if it's positively disagreeable to you we'll instantly drop the idea. But I —I thought you really liked me enough —!" She turned away impatiently, and he went on to argue imperturbably that she had always treated him in the kindest way in the world. He added that the worst was over, the start, they were off; the thing would be in all the evening papers. Wasn't it much simpler to accept it? That was all they would have to do; and all *she* would have to do would be not to contradict it and to smile and thank people when she was congratulated. She would have to *act* a little, but that would just be part of the fun. Oh, he hadn't the shadow of a scruple about taking the world in; the world deserved it richly, and she couldn't deny that this was what she had felt for him, that she had really been moved to compassion. He grew eloquent and charged her with having recognised in his predicament a genuine motive for charity. Their little plot would last while it could,—it would be a part of their amusement to *make* it last. Even if it should be short-lived there would have been always so much gained. But they would be ingenious, they would find ways, they would have no end of sport.

"You must be ingenious, I can't," said Mary. "If people scarcely ever see us together, they'll guess we're trying to humbug them."

"But they *will* see us together. We *are* together. We've been together,—I mean we've seen a lot of each other—all our lives."

"Ah, not *that* way!"

"Oh, trust me to carry it off!" cried the young man, whose imagination had now evidently begun to glow in the air of their pious fraud.

"You'll find it a dreadful bore," said Mary Gosselin.

"Then I'll drop it, don't you see? And *you'll* drop it, of course, the moment *you've* had enough," Lord Beauprey punctually added. "But as soon as you begin to realise what a lot of good you do me you won't want to drop it. That is if you're what I take you for!" laughed his lordship.

If a third person had been present at this conversation,—and there was nothing in it, surely, that might not have been spoken before a trusty listener—that person would perhaps have thought, from the immediate expression of Mary Gosselin's face, that she was on the point of exclaiming, "You take me for a perfect fool!" No such ungracious words in fact, however, passed her lips; she only said, after an instant: "What reason do you propose to give, on the day you need one, for our rupture?"

Her interlocutor stared. "To you, do you mean?"

"I sha'n't ask you for one. I mean to other people."

"Oh, I'll tell them you're sick of me. I'll put everything on you, and you'll put everything on me."

"You *have* worked it out!" Mary exclaimed.

"Oh, I shall be intensely considerate."

"Do you call that being considerate,—publicly accusing me?"

Guy Firminger stared again. "Why, isn't that the reason *you'll* give?"

She looked at him an instant. "I won't tell you the reason I shall give."

"Oh, I shall learn it from others."

"I hope you'll like it when you do!" said Mary, with sudden gaiety; and she added frankly, but kindly, the hope that he might soon light upon some young person who would really take his fancy. He replied that he shouldn't be in a hurry,—that was now just the comfort; and she, as if thinking over to the end the list of arguments against his clumsy contrivance, broke out: "And of course you mustn't dream of giving me anything,—any tokens or presents."

"Then it won't look natural."

"That's exactly what I say. You can't make it deceive anybody."

"I *must* give you something,—something that people can see. You can simply put it away after a little and give it back." But about this Mary was visibly serious; she declared that she wouldn't touch anything that came from his hand, and she spoke in such a tone that he coloured a little and hastened to say: "Oh, all right, I shall be thoroughly careful!" This appeared to complete their understanding; so that after it was settled that for the deluded world they *were* engaged, there was obviously nothing for him to do but to go. He therefore shook hands with her very gratefully and departed.

HENRY JAMES.

(To be continued.)

THE STRANGER IN THE HOUSE.

IF the famous "Newcastle Programme" is not destined to be carried out in our time, it has at least provided subjects for a good deal of talk in the House of Commons. Some of this talk has been quite harmless, and a little of it decidedly interesting. The Eight Hours question, the Payment of Members of Parliament, the Repeal of the Septennial Act, the Compulsory Purchase of Land for Small Allotments,—these and other topics which are believed to be uppermost in the minds of the great British public have been brought forward, and they have served the purpose of keeping the dangerous controversy over Home Rule in the background. Anything is more acceptable to the true Gladstonian as a theme of discussion than that. For this very reason, no doubt, Mr. Blane has arranged that the whole subject shall be raised in solemn debate on the 6th of this present month of May, in order that the mystery which surrounds it may be dispelled, and that Mr. Gladstone or some one on his behalf may explain how much or how little is meant by what is at present but an empty phrase. Mr. Blane is one of your "self-made men"; a tailor by "profession," and a devoted follower of the late Mr. Parnell. As a speaker he rarely fails to afford the House rather more than his fair share of amusement, although he does not start out with any such intention. Whether Mr. Parnell ever spoke to him or not may perhaps be doubted; as a rule, the Irish leader did not select the Blanes of the party for his companionship or his confidence. All the more touching is Mr. Blane's devotion to the memory of his chief. He is one of the Old Guard, who maintain that Mr. Gladstone slew Mr. Parnell by a treacherous stab, and who nourish a desperate hope

of wreaking a signal revenge. This is the secret of the "demonstration" which is to be made in the early days of May, unless the Government steps in and swallows up all the nights allotted to Private Members. It may be that Mr. Balfour will not think it expedient thus to interpose between Mr. Blane and Mr. Gladstone. The combatants are not quite equally matched, but there are other Parnellites in reserve, and if they have made up their minds to force Mr. Gladstone's hand and to insist on explanations which he cannot give with any regard to safety, or even to prudence, an evening's entertainment will be provided which ought on no account to be missed. All the more interest will attach to it from the fact that this has so far been Mr. Gladstone's Session. Since his return from the Continent he has been monarch of all he surveyed. The sprightliness of his youth has returned, his voice has recovered something of its pristine freshness, his incomparable way of putting things has never been more brilliantly displayed. All his colleagues dwindle down to the size of dwarfs by his side, and the Ministry show to no better advantage. And yet in spite of his undeniable supremacy, the strange phenomenon to which I have already called attention has again been visible,—that is to say, a large section of his own followers have refused to obey him, or even to take his advice in a moment of difficulty. This is a sign of the times which is fraught with significance to those who are attempting to make a forecast of the future of parties.

I was present in the House when the memorable Home Rule Bill of 1886 was introduced, and a very wonderful sight it was which then met the Stranger's eye. The whole of

the floor of the House was filled up with chairs, through which the Speaker had to thread his way when he first entered with the Sergeant-at-Arms and the Chaplain. Since that time I do not think I have seen the House so full as it was on the 7th of April. All the galleries were crowded, the Peers occupied every inch of the space set aside for them, and the Commons were driven to the side galleries, or were compelled to sit on the floor in the passages which are known as the gangways. Of course, in the absence of some special measure of uncommon importance, only one thing could have brought so large an assembly together,—the prospect of a scene or of a “personal explanation.” The House, in truth, was about to vindicate its dignity, and it must be sorrowfully confessed that it never appears to less advantage than when it is engaged in work of that kind. There must be a debate, and it is sure to fall into the hands of some group of Members who take much greater delight in bringing Parliamentary institutions into ridicule and contempt than in elevating them in the view of mankind. The bores and twaddlers who have no conception of their own insignificance and folly will insist on forcing themselves to the front, and when there they do their best to turn the proceedings into a farce. So it fell out on the occasion in question. Certain persons had been guilty of an undoubted breach of privilege, their offence was clear, and they might have been suitably dealt with and dismissed within the compass of an hour. But from five o’clock in the afternoon till after midnight the stream of muddy verbiage crept along, amid many brawls and not a little sheer imbecility. The offenders outside knew all the while that nothing very serious was to happen to them, and they laughed in their sleeves at the judges who were squabbling over their case. Mr. Gladstone, at a comparatively early period of the afternoon, made a speech in which he put the House on the right track, and had the

course he recommended been taken then and there, the whole proceedings would have been brought to an end, and the “dignity of the House” would have been preserved. It was not the fault of the Conservatives that this did not happen; it was owing entirely to Mr. Gladstone’s own followers. In former days no one would have risen after him, so thoroughly had he disposed of the whole business. The Radicals could not see it. They insisted upon taking divisions in direct conflict with Mr. Gladstone’s views; some of them even lectured him upon his presumption in offering them advice. And these are the materials which he expects to find pliable in his hands whenever he comes back to power! Verily there are persons who “dream dreams” besides Mr. Morley’s young men. Here was the great leader who is supposed to be the object of the enthusiastic devotion of the “regenerated” Liberal party, proving by a conclusive argument, and by the production of precedents, that a certain course which he pointed out was the proper one to take. He was instantly contradicted and opposed by such men as Mr. Cremer, Mr. Cunningham-Graham, Mr. Channing, and Mr. Conybeare. And upon the test division, 136 of his so-called followers voted against him. This is the party which is going to give peace, unity, and brotherly love to the whole country whenever it comes back to power. Mr. Gladstone himself has the gift of being able to shut his eyes to the difficulties of the future. One of his trusted lieutenants whom I happen to know said to me on the night of this new mutiny: “We may beat the Tories at the next election, but our worst enemies are in our own ranks. How are we going to beat them?”—a question altogether too hard for an unsophisticated Stranger to determine.

Apart from these troublesome problems, there have been some really good debates during the past month, and the best qualities of the House of Commons were displayed on more

than one occasion. The Conservatives have returned to their work in considerable numbers, and Mr. Balfour stands as well as ever he did in their estimation. He has acquired confidence and firmness, and made some very effective speeches. The way in which he disposed of Mr. Timothy Healy the evening before the adjournment for the Easter holidays will not soon be forgotten. He has managed to get through his ordinary work almost without attracting attention, and that is a sure mark of success. Thus far he has physically withstood the wear and tear of his laborious post remarkably well, although he sometimes shows signs of great fatigue; and no wonder, considering what he has to do. He must attend to all sorts of complicated questions which necessarily arise in connection with the management of his party; he must direct the general course of business in the House of Commons, settle the rival claims of candidates for particular constituencies, smooth down discontent, and what must be almost worse than all, go out to dinner, sometimes for the purpose of making a long speech, on his only spare evenings. A man in his position would probably gladly give up half his salary to have his Wednesday and Saturday evenings left absolutely at his own disposal. But in these times there is no rest by day or night for the leader of the House of Commons. If he can get a part of Sunday to himself he may be duly thankful. The chief Whip wishes to consult him at all hours, and members of his own party who have a grievance will not rest satisfied until they have brought it under his special notice. Mr. Smith used to reply to all these letters with his own hand; it is to be hoped that Mr. Balfour calls more freely into exercise the type-writer and the private secretary. I recollect a rather foolish and fussy member of the House saying to me, "I have told old Smith my opinions, I have given him a piece of my mind." A few days afterwards

he showed me a long letter which Mr. Smith had written in reply, and I was astonished at the trouble the leader had taken to please a mere feather-head. But in our days, if one may quote a homely proverb, Jack is as good as his master. It is not safe to run the risk of offending anybody. Many people wonder how this Minister or the other, persons of notoriously slender qualifications for office, manage to get along so well as they do. The secret is that they studiously keep on good terms with everybody. They never snub, never indulge in sarcasms, never wound anybody's vanity. Whenever it is worth their while to do so, they will pour the sweet oil of flattery on the head and down the beard of friend or foe. In this way a very commonplace man not only gets through his period of office with credit, but is very likely at the end of it to find himself with the reputation of a great statesman. If any one were to place before me the list of the present Ministry, I think I could mark off at least half a dozen names of men whose appointment to office has been a subject of the most profound astonishment to all who know them, or who have been brought into any kind of association with them. They have kept out of scrapes by being ever ready to prostrate themselves before anybody who is likely to be dangerous. They very carefully nurse the Press, and feed the reporters outside with scraps of news. They are not all in the House of Commons, mark you; but the House of Lords is far too august a body for me to criticise. Let a man but once set his foot in the magic circle of Office, and it will be his own fault if he ever finds himself outside it again. He may not be able to scramble into a peerage, with one of the chief offices of State attached to it, but he will get a good place, and be able to do something now and then for his relations. A *Handbook to Office*, written by a competent hand, and with examples from the Administrations of the last twenty years, would

be an exceedingly curious volume to us who are still living, and prove of incalculable value to the historian who is to come after us. But the author would have to know his way through so many labyrinths and be acquainted with so many ramifications of personal history, and the ins and outs of such numerous appointments at home and abroad, that a man of such attainments could scarcely fail to be singled out for some preferment himself long before he had got through his task.

We know, however, that all the crooked places will be made straight when Members of Parliament are paid for their services. That was proved not long ago by Mr. Fenwick, who presents in his own case an excellent example of a working-man who is a paid Member, though paid by a Trades' Union and not by the Treasury. The ablest and most respected of all these "working-men Members" is Mr. Burt, the representative of Morpeth. Almost any system would be worth adopting which filled the House of Commons with such men as Mr. Burt. But they are not over numerous in any rank of life, and it does not follow that if we were to go down into a coal-pit to find them we should invariably be successful. Mr. Burt is no orator, indeed, his strong Northumbrian accent sometimes makes it rather difficult to follow him. But he is the very embodiment of sterling honesty and common sense, utterly incapable of political shuffling or of sacrificing even the least of his convictions from any motive of self-interest. I count myself peculiarly fortunate when I chance to be in the House while Mr. Burt is speaking, but I need scarcely add that Mr. Burt, being what I have said, very seldom makes a speech. He generally occupies a humble back seat and listens to the self-constituted champions of labour, like Mr. Cunninghame Graham who have determined to make this field peculiarly their own. The House is never unwilling to listen to Mr.

Graham, not by any means because of the weight it attaches to his opinions, but on account of the eccentric flavour he contrives to impart to anything he has to say. He has what people call "individuality," and he is carefully made up and dressed for the part he has to play. He is the gentleman who so valiantly led the mob in Trafalgar Square on a memorable occasion, who succeeded, after several futile efforts, in getting his head broken, and who retired to heal it in the secure recesses of Pentonville prison. He is the sworn enemy of "capital." When some one a little while ago was remarking in the House that labour and capital ought to be friends, Mr. Graham indignantly shouted "No!" for his infallible plan for settling all phases of labour difficulties is that eternal war should be waged against capital. The genuine labour representatives in the House do not take up this position; perhaps because they are not, like Mr. Graham, large landowners and capitalists. In the official account of Members of Parliament which is supplied mainly by themselves, Mr. Graham is careful the world should be informed that he comes on his mother's side from the sister of a Baron and the daughter of an Admiral, a capital pedigree for a wealthy Socialist. It is also incidentally mentioned that he succeeded to the estates of Gallnigad, Gartmore, and Ardoch, not a single one of which has yet been given up to the special purposes and uses of the labouring classes. Mr. Graham describes himself as a "Socialist," but he is evidently not quite prepared to "live the life." Labour and capital must always be in conflict, but Mr. Graham has judiciously made up his mind to hold fast to the capital. It is far pleasanter to be poor in theory than in reality. This is the difference between Mr. Graham and Mr. Burt. The latter began life as a miner, and has a practical knowledge of every side of the labour question. That is why the House listens to him with profound attention and respect. It will also

listen to a *farceur*, but not exactly in the same spirit. As a matter of fact, labour is very strongly represented in the House of Commons, if not in point of numbers, certainly in ability. Mr. Fenwick and Mr. Wilson are both men of considerable intellectual power; both were working colliers. Mr. Howell is a good writer as well as a good speaker, and a man who has had the courage to risk a quarrel with Trades' Unions and with his constituents when he believed that he was right and they were wrong. He was a working bricklayer. Will anyone who knows the House allege that the most respectful hearing is not always accorded to these Members, or that "capital," even in the person of Mr. Graham, has any advantage over them in that Chamber? I am sure the labour representatives themselves would not put forward any such complaint.

Most of the discussions to which I have referred ended in nothing. The Septennial Act has not been repealed, and Members of Parliament will have to wait some time yet before they are called upon to take pay for their services whether they want it or not. One can with difficulty imagine a new Parliament coming together and decreeing its own extinction in three years. That would be a triumph of principle over self-interest such as history has seldom recorded, and I gathered from the recent debate that the Gladstonians are scarcely prepared to make the requisite sacrifice. Yet somebody must begin. The Septennial Act can never be repealed without one party or another voluntarily abridging its term of power. The fatal stroke might no doubt be reserved for the concluding days of a Parliament, but the party which expected to come in at the next election would have many compunctions about making up their minds to vote for the measure. There is a good deal of "make-believe" in all these debates on proposals which involve an entire change in the present Parliamentary system. Even Mr. Henry Fowler, who is one of the most prac-

tical men on the Gladstonian side, could not conceal this fact when he was speaking on the Septennial Act. He is far too strong a partisan to be willing to give the Tories a chance of recovering power at the expiration of three years when he might keep them out for six or seven. Mr. Fowler will probably be Chancellor of the Exchequer some day, and he will then clearly perceive that it is for the good of his country that he should remain in office as long as possible.

There is always one afternoon and evening in the course of every Session when the House becomes intensely business-like, and that is when the Budget is produced. But I have never seen so scanty or so listless an audience on such an occasion as that which assembled just before the adjournment for Easter. Mr. Goschen may be one of the ablest financiers that ever lived, but he has not the art of making his Budgets interesting, or of holding the attention of his hearers. He is excessively diffuse, he dwells too long on some favourite point of his own, he frequently loses himself amid the vast array of statistics which it is needful to present. Thus it happened last month that the House was more than half empty when he began his speech, and it kept continually thinning out until he sat down. In vain he tried to arrest this slow but incessant movement towards the doors by attempts to be light and jocose, and by rhetorical flourishes which inevitably seem out of place in a statement of facts and figures, unless they are introduced by the hand of a master. The "decorative arts," either of literature or eloquence, do not harmonise well with an explanation of the way in which it is proposed to make receipts balance expenditure. I noticed a smile on many faces when Mr. Goschen opened his Budget with these words:—"Sir, it frequently happens that when a traveller finds himself in a mountainous country, and is ascending slowly, he fancies that the point he sees above him is the highest part

of the hill, only to find that when he has reached it it is not the top, and that he has still further slopes to climb." A very young man might be excused for beginning a speech in this way, but the House had not anticipated it from Mr. Goschen, and he was made to feel that he had struck the wrong keynote. It is strange how easy it is for an old stager to fall into mistakes of this kind. Having to mention the fact that the receipts from the duty on rum had fallen off, Mr. Goschen said, in his most solemn tones (and they are indescribably solemn) "Rum toppled first—brandy followed suit—beer hung fire," and so on. The audience still kept diminishing, until at one time there were not above a hundred Members in the House, an unprecedented occurrence on a Budget night. The lack of interest, however, was in part caused by the fact that it early became evident Mr. Goschen would have no important secrets to reveal. His surplus was too small to permit of any reduction of taxation, and no Chancellor of the Exchequer in his senses would venture to impose new taxes on the eve of a general election. The whole story might easily have been told in half an hour, but that would not have come up to the standard of a Budget speech. In December, 1852, Mr. Disraeli spoke for five hours and a quarter in introducing his Budget, and Mr. Gladstone has fully equalled, if he has not eclipsed, that record. Some day a Chancellor of the Exchequer will arise who will be content to frame his statement on much more modest lines, and with a view to putting all the material facts into as short a compass as possible. It will be found that when the House of Commons gets over its surprise, it will welcome the change.

And now the heads of the Ministry must soon make up their minds when the great and decisive appeal to the country shall be made. Their own followers are beginning to cry out for it, fearing that if it be too long post-

poned the autumn holidays will vanish into thin air. To keep the House hard at work through the months of July and August, and then to fling the jaded Members into the whirlpool of a Dissolution, would be most unwise, and probably most disastrous. For not only have a great many Conservatives given up public life, but many more are anxious to do so, and are restrained from a feeling of loyalty to their constituents or to their party. Why is this? I ventured to ask a Conservative Member of my acquaintance the other day, and this is what he replied:—"The Conservative Party, my friend, is dead and gone. Why should I, who have been in Parliament upwards of thirty years, come down here night after night to vote for measures which are in direct conflict with all the principles I have been professing, with the sanction and encouragement of our leaders? The revision of judicial rents was denounced by Lord Salisbury himself as a dishonest proposition; yet we were made to vote for it. We have passed a law breaking leases in Ireland and annulling contracts. We are on the point of passing another law which will some day lose us India. We have saddled the country with an expenditure of between two and three millions a year for Free Education, which is destined to break up our Voluntary Schools. These are not Conservative measures. I have had enough of them. That is why I am going out of Parliament. But if anybody should inquire of you if you happen to know the reason, pray tell him it is all on account of my health. I shall make way for a London shopkeeper or a universal provider, and as he will always vote with the Government, which in due time will make him a baronet or a peer, he will be called a better Conservative than I am." And so saying my venerable but melancholy friend went out to refresh himself on the terrace with a breath of Thames air, mixed with a subtle perfume from Doulton's works a little higher up the river.

MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

JUNE, 1892.

DON ORSINO.¹

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD.

CHAPTER XIII.

DEL FERICE kept his word and arranged matters for Orsino with a speed and skill which excited the latter's admiration. The affair was not indeed very complicated though it involved a deed of sale, the transfer of a mortgage, and a deed of partnership between Orsino Saracinesca and Andrea Contini, architect, under the style "Andrea Contini and Company," besides a contract between this firm of the one party and the bank, in which Del Ferice was a director, of the other; the partners agreeing to continue the building of the half-finished house, and the bank binding itself to advance small sums up to a certain amount for current expenses of material and workmen's wages. Orsino signed everything required of him after reading the documents, and Andrea Contini followed his example.

The architect was a tall man with bright brown eyes, a dark and somewhat ragged beard, close-cropped hair, a prominent bony forehead, and large, coarsely-shaped, thin ears oddly set upon his head. He habitually wore a dark overcoat, of which the collar was generally turned up on one side and not on the other. Judging from the appearance of his strong shoes he had always been walking a long distance over bad roads, and when it had

rained within the week his trousers were generally bespattered with mud to a considerable height above the heel. He habitually carried an extinguished cigar between his teeth, of which he chewed the thin black end uneasily. Orsino fancied that he might be about eight-and-twenty years old, and was not altogether displeased with his appearance. He was not at all like the majority of his kind, who, in Rome at least, usually affect a scrupulous dandyism of attire and an uncommon refinement of manner. Whatever Contini's faults might prove to be, Orsino did not believe that they would turn out to be those of idleness or vanity. How far he was right in his judgment will appear before long, but he conceived his partner to be gifted, frank, enthusiastic, and careless of outward forms.

As for the architect himself, he surveyed Orsino with a sort of sympathetic curiosity which the latter would have thought unpleasantly familiar if he had understood it. Contini had never spoken before with any more exalted personage than Del Ferice, and he studied the young aristocrat as though he were a being from another world. He hesitated some time as to the proper mode of addressing him, and at last decided to call him "Signor Principe." Orsino seemed quite satisfied with this, and the archi-

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tect was inwardly pleased when the young man said "Signor Contini" instead of Contini alone. It was quite clear that Del Ferice had already acquainted him with all the details of the situation, for he seemed to understand all the documents at a glance, picking out and examining the important clauses with unfailing acuteness, and pointing with his finger to the place where Orsino was to sign his name.

At the end of the interview Orsino shook hands with Del Ferice and thanked him warmly for his kindness, after which he and his partner went out together. They stood side by side upon the pavement for a few seconds, each wondering what the other was going to say.

"Perhaps we had better go and look at the house, Signor Principe," observed Contini, in the midst of an ineffectual effort to light the stump of his cigar.

"I think so too," answered Orsino, realising that since he had acquired the property it would be as well to know how it looked. "You see I have trusted my adviser entirely in the matter, and I am ashamed to say I do not know where the house is."

Andrea Contini looked at him curiously.

"This is the first time that you have had anything to do with business of this kind, Signor Principe," he observed. "You have fallen into good hands."

"Yours?" inquired Orsino, a little stiffly.

"No. I mean that Count del Ferice is a good adviser in this matter."

"I hope so."

"I am sure of it," said Contini with conviction. "It would be a great surprise to me if we failed to make a handsome profit by this contract."

"There is luck and ill luck in everything," answered Orsino, signalling to a passing cab.

The two men exchanged few words as they drove up to the new quarter

in the direction indicated to the driver by Contini. The cab entered a sort of broad lane, the sketch of a future street, rough with the unrolled metalting of broken stones, the space set apart for the pavement being an uneven path of trodden brown earth. Here and there tall detached houses rose out of the wilderness, mostly covered by scaffoldings and swarming with workmen, but hideous where so far finished as to be visible in all the isolation of their six-storied nakedness. A strong smell of lime, wet earth, and damp masonry was blown into Orsino's nostrils by the scirocco wind. Contini stopped the cab before an unpromising and deserted erection of poles, boards, and tattered matting.

"This is our house," he said, getting out and immediately making another attempt to light his cigar.

"May I offer you a cigarette?" asked Orsino, holding out his case.

Contini touched his hat, bowed a little awkwardly, and took one of the cigarettes, which he immediately transferred to his coat-pocket.

"If you will allow me I will smoke it by and by," he said. "I have not finished my cigar."

Orsino stood on the slippery ground beside the stones and contemplated his purchase. All at once his heart sank and he felt a profound disgust for everything within the range of his vision. He was suddenly aware of his own total and hopeless ignorance of everything connected with building, theoretical or practical. The sight of the stiff angular scaffoldings, draped with torn straw mattings that flapped fantastically in the south-east wind, the apparent absence of anything like a real house behind them, the blades of grass sprouting abundantly about the foot of each pole and covering the heaps of brown *pozzolana* earth prepared for making mortar, even the detail of a broken wooden hod before the boarded entrance,—all these things contributed at once to increase his dismay and to fill him with a bitter sense of inevitable failure. He found

nothing to say, as he stood with his hands in his pockets staring at the general desolation, but he understood for the first time why women cry for disappointment. And, moreover, this desolation was his own peculiar property, by deed of purchase, and he could not get rid of it.

Meanwhile Andrea Contini stood beside him, examining the scaffoldings with his bright brown eyes, in no way disconcerted by the prospect.

"Shall we go in?" he asked at last.

"Do unfinished houses always look like this?" inquired Orsino, in a hopeless tone, without noticing his companion's proposition.

"Not always," answered Contini cheerfully. "It depends upon the amount of work that has been done, and upon other things. Sometimes the foundations sink and the buildings collapse."

"Are you sure nothing of the kind has happened here?" asked Orsino with increasing anxiety.

"I have been several times to look at it since the baker died and I have not noticed any cracks yet," answered the architect, whose coolness seemed almost exasperating.

"I suppose you understand these things, Signor Contini?"

Contini laughed, and felt in his pockets for a crumpled paper box of wax-lights.

"It is my profession," he answered. "And then, I built this house from the foundations. If you will come in, Signor Principe, I will show you how solidly the work is done."

He took a key from his pocket and thrust it into a hole in the boarding, which latter proved to be a rough door and opened noisily upon rusty hinges. Orsino followed him in silence. To the young man's inexperienced eye the interior of the building was even more depressing than the outside. It smelt like a vault, and a dim gray light entered the square apertures from the curtained scaffoldings without, just sufficient to help one to find a way

through the heaps of rubbish that covered the unpaved floors. Contini explained rapidly and concisely the arrangement of the rooms, calling one cave familiarly a dining-room and another a "conjugal bedroom," as he expressed it, and expatiating upon the facilities of communication which he himself had carefully planned. Orsino listened in silence and followed his guide patiently from place to place, in and out of dark passages and up flights of stairs as yet unguarded by any rail, until they emerged upon a sort of flat terrace intersected by low walls, which was indeed another floor, and above which another story and a garret were yet to be built to complete the house. Orsino looked gloomily about him, lighted a cigarette and sat down upon a bit of masonry.

"To me, it looks very like failure," he remarked. "But I suppose there is something in it."

"It will not look like failure next month," said Contini carelessly. "Another story is soon built, and then the attic, and then, if you like, a Gothic roof and a turret at one corner. That always attracts buyers first and respectable lodgers afterwards."

"Let us have a turret, by all means," answered Orsino, as though his tailor had proposed to put an extra button on the cuff of his coat. "But how in the world are you going to begin? Everything looks to me as though it were falling to pieces."

"Leave all that to me, Signor Principe. We will begin to-morrow. I have a good overseer and there are plenty of workmen to be had. We have material for a week at least, and paid for, excepting a few cartloads of lime. Come again in ten days and you will see something worth looking at."

"In ten days? And what am I to do in the meantime?" asked Orsino, who fancied that he had found an occupation.

Andrea Contini looked at him in some surprise, not understanding in the least what he meant.

"I mean, am I to have nothing to do with the work?" asked Orsino.

"Oh,—as far as that goes, you will come every day, Signor Principe, if it amuses you, though as you are not a practical architect, your assistance is not needed until questions of taste have to be considered, such as the Gothic roof for instance. But there are the accounts to be kept, of course, and there is the business with the bank from week to week, office work of various kinds. That becomes naturally your department, as the practical superintendence of the building is mine, but you will of course leave it to the steward of the Signor Principe di Sant' Illario, who is a man of affairs."

"I will do nothing of the kind!" exclaimed Orsino. "I will do it myself. I will learn how it is done. I want occupation."

"What an extraordinary wish!" Andrea Contini opened his eyes in real astonishment.

"Is it? You work. Why should not I?"

"I must, and you need not, Signor Principe," observed the architect. "But if you insist, then you had better get a clerk to explain the details to you at first."

"Do you not understand them? Can you not teach me?" asked Orsino, displeased with the idea of employing a third person.

"Oh yes, I have been a clerk myself. I should be too much honoured, but,—the fact is, my spare time——"

He hesitated and seemed reluctant to explain.

"What do you do with your spare time?" asked Orsino, suspecting some love affair.

"The fact is, I play a second violin at one of the theatres, and I give lessons on the mandoline, and sometimes I do copying work for my uncle who is a clerk in the Treasury. You see he is old, and his eyes are not as good as they were."

Orsino began to think that his

partner was a very odd person. He could not help smiling at the enumeration of his architect's secondary occupations.

"You are very fond of music, then?" he asked.

"Eh—yes—as one can be without talent,—a little by necessity. To be an architect one must have houses to build. You see the baker died unexpectedly. One must live somehow."

"And could you not,—how shall I say? Would you not be willing to give me lessons in book-keeping instead of teaching some one else to play the mandoline?"

"You would not care to learn the mandoline yourself, Signor Principe? It is a very pretty instrument, especially for country parties, as well as for serenading."

Orsino laughed. He did not see himself in the character of a mandolinist.

"I have not the slightest ear for music," he answered. "I would much rather learn something about business."

"It is less amusing," said Andrea Contini regretfully. "But I am at your service. I will come to the office when work is over and we will do the accounts together. You will learn in that way very quickly."

"Thank you. I suppose we must have an office. It is necessary, is it not?"

"Indispensable; a room, a garret—anything. A habitation, a legal domicile, so to say."

"Where do you live, Signor Contini? Would not your lodging do?"

"I am afraid not, Signor Principe. At least not for the present. I am not very well lodged and the stairs are badly lighted."

"Why not here, then?" asked Orsino, suddenly growing desperately practical, for he felt unaccountably reluctant to hire an office in the city.

"We should pay no rent," said Contini. "It is an idea. But the walls are dry down stairs, and we only

need a pavement, and plastering, and doors and windows, and papering and some furniture to make one of the rooms quite habitable. It is an idea, undoubtedly. Besides, it would give the house an air of being inhabited, which is valuable."

"How long will all that take? A month or two?"

"About a week. It will be a little fresh, but if you are not rheumatic, Signor Principe, we can try it."

"I am not rheumatic," laughed Orsino, who was pleased with the idea of having his office on the spot, and apparently in the midst of a wilderness. "And I suppose you really do understand architecture, Signor Contini, though you do play the fiddle."

In this exceedingly sketchy way was the firm of Andrea Contini and Company established and lodged, being at the time in a very shadowy state, theoretically and practically, though it was destined to play a more prominent part in affairs than either of the young partners anticipated. Orsino discovered before long that his partner was a man of skill and energy, and his spirits rose by degrees as the work began to advance. Contini was restless, untiring, and gifted, such a character as Orsino had not yet met in his limited experience of the world. The man seemed to understand his business to the smallest details and could show the workmen how to mix mortar in the right proportions, or how to strengthen a scaffolding at the weak point much better than the overseer or the master-builder. At the books he seemed to be infallible, and he possessed, moreover, such a power of stating things clearly and neatly that Orsino actually learnt from him in a few weeks what he would have needed six months to learn anywhere else. So soon as the first dread of failure wore off, Orsino discovered that he was happier than he had ever been in the course of his life before. What he did was not, indeed, of much use in the progress of the office work and rather hindered

than helped Contini, who was obliged to do everything slowly and sometimes twice over in order to make his pupil understand; but Orsino had a clear and practical mind, and did not forget what he had learned once. An odd sort of friendship sprang up between the two men, who in ordinary circumstances would never have met, or known each other by sight. The one had expected to find in his partner an overbearing ignorant patrician; the other had supposed that his companion would turn out a vulgar, sordid, half-educated builder. Both were equally surprised when each discovered the truth about the other.

Though Orsino was reticent by nature, he took no especial pains to conceal his goings and comings, but as his occupation took him out of the ordinary beat followed by his idle friends, it was a long time before any of them discovered that he was engaged in practical business. In his own home he was not questioned, and he said nothing. The Saracinesca were considered eccentric, but no one interfered with them nor ventured to offer them suggestions. If they chose to allow their heir absolute liberty of action, merely because he had passed his twenty-first birthday, it was their own concern, and his ruin would be upon their own heads. No one cared to risk a savage retort from the aged prince, or a cutting answer from Sant' Ilario, for the questionable satisfaction of telling either that Orsino was going to the bad. The only person who really knew what Orsino was about, and who could have claimed the right to speak to his family of his doings, was San Giacinto, and he held his peace, having plenty of important affairs of his own to occupy him and being blessed with an especial gift for leaving other people to themselves.

Sant' Ilario never spied upon his son, as many of his contemporaries would have done in his place. He preferred to trust him to his own devices so long as these led to no great mischief. He saw that Orsino was

less restless than formerly, that he was less at the club, and that he was stirring earlier in the morning than had been his wont, and he was well satisfied.

It was not to be expected, however, that Orsino should take Maria Consuelo literally at her word, and cease from visiting her all at once. If not really in love with her, he was at least so much interested in her that he sorely missed the daily half hour or more which he had been used to spend in her society.

Three several times he went to her hôtel at the accustomed hour, and each time he was told by the porter that she was at home; but on each occasion, also, when he sent up his card, the hotel servant returned with a message from the maid to the effect that Madame d'Aranjuez was tired and did not receive. Orsino's pride rebelled equally against making a further attempt and against writing a letter requesting an explanation. Once only, when he was walking alone she passed him in a carriage, and she acknowledged his bow quietly and naturally, as though nothing had happened. He fancied she was paler than usual, and that there were shadows under her eyes which he had not formerly noticed. Possibly, he thought, she was really not in good health, and the excuses made through her maid were not wholly invented. He was conscious that his heart beat a little faster as he watched the back of the brougham disappearing in the distance, but he did not feel an irresistible longing to make another and more serious attempt to see her. He tried to analyse his own sensations, and it seemed to him that he rather dreaded a meeting than desired it, and that he felt a certain humiliation for which he could not account. In the midst of his analysis, his cigarette went out and he sighed. He was startled by such an expression of feeling, and tried to remember whether he had ever sighed before in his life, but if he had, he could not recall the

circumstances. He tried to console himself with the absurd supposition that he was sleepy and that the long-drawn breath had been only a suppressed yawn. Then he walked on, gazing before him into the purple haze that filled the deep street just as the sun was setting, and a vague sadness and longing touched him which had no place in his catalogue of permissible emotions, and which were as far removed from the cold cynicism which he admired in others and affected in himself as they were beyond the sphere of his analysis.

There is an age, not always to be fixed exactly, at which the really masculine nature craves the society of womankind, in one shape or another, as a necessity of existence, and by the society of womankind no one means merely the daily and hourly social intercourse which consists in exchanging the same set of remarks half a dozen times a day with as many beings of gentle sex who, to the careless eye of ordinary man, differ from each other in dress rather than in face or thought. There are eminently manly men, that is to say men fearless, strong, honourable and active, to whom the common five o'clock tea presents as much distraction and offers as much womanly sympathy as they need; who choose their intimate friends among men, rather than among women, and who die at an advanced age without ever having been more than comfortably in love,—and of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. The masculine man may be as brave, as strong, and as scrupulously just in all his dealings; but on the other hand he may be weak, cowardly, and a cheat, and he is apt to inherit the portion of sinners, whatever his moral characteristics may be, good or bad.

Orsino was certainly not unmanly, but he was also eminently masculine, and he began to suffer from the loss of Maria Consuelo's conversation in a way that surprised himself. His acquaintance with her, to give it a mild name, had been the first of the kind

which he had enjoyed, and it contrasted too strongly with the crude experiences of his untried youth not to be highly valued by him and deeply regretted. He might pretend to laugh at it, and repeat to himself that his Egeria had been but a very superficial person, fervent in the reading of the daily novel and possibly not even worldly wise; he did not miss her any the less for that. A little sympathy and much patience in listening will go far to make a woman of small gifts indispensable even to a man of superior talent, especially when he thinks himself misunderstood in his ordinary surroundings. The sympathy passes for intelligence and the patience for assent and encouragement; a touch of the hand, and there is friendship, a tear, a sigh, and devotion stands upon the stage, bearing in her arms an infant love who learns to walk his part at the first suspicion of a kiss.

Orsino did not imagine that he had exhausted the world's capabilities of happiness. The age of Byronism, as it used to be called, is over. Possibly tragedies are more real and frequent in our day than when the century was young; at all events those which take place seem to draw a new element of horror from those undefinable, mechanical, prosaic, pseudo-scientific conditions which make our lives so different from those of our fathers. Everything is terribly sudden nowadays, and alarmingly quick. Lovers make love across Europe by telegraph, and poetic justice arrives in less than forty-eight hours by the Oriental Express. Divorce is our weapon of precision, and every pack of cards at the gaming-table can distil a poison more destructive than that of the Borgia. The unities of time and place are preserved by wire and rail in a way which would have delighted the hearts of the old French tragics. Perhaps men seek dramatic situations in their own lives less readily since they have found out means of making the concluding act more swift, sudden, and inevitable. At all events we all like tragedy less and

comedy more than our fathers did, which, I think, shows that we are sadder and possibly wiser men than they.

However this may be, Orsino was no more inclined to fancy himself unhappy than any of his familiar companions, though he was quite willing to believe that he understood most of life's problems, and especially the heart of woman. He continued to go into the world, for it was new to him, and if he did not find exactly the sort of sympathy he secretly craved, he found at least a great deal of consideration, some flattery, and a certain amount of amusement. But when he was not actually being amused, or really engaged in the work which he had undertaken with so much enthusiasm, he felt lonely and missed Maria Consuelo more than ever. By this time she had taken a position in society from which there could be no drawing back, and he gave up for ever the hope of seeing her in his own circle. She seemed to avoid even the Gray houses where they might have met on neutral ground, and Orsino saw that his only chance of finding her in the world lay in going frequently and openly to Del Ferice's house. He had called on Donna Tullia after the dinner of course, but he was not prepared to do more, and Del Ferice did not seem to expect it.

Three or four weeks after he had entered into partnership with Andrea Contini, Orsino found himself alone with his mother in the evening. Corona was seated near the fire in her favourite boudoir, with a book in her hand, and Orsino stood warming himself on one side of the chimney-piece, staring into the flames and occasionally glancing at his mother's calm, dark face. He was debating whether he should stay at home or not.

Corona became conscious that he looked at her from time to time and dropped her novel upon her knee.

"Are you going out, Orsino?" she asked.

"I hardly know," he answered.

"There is nothing particular to do, and it is too late for the theatre."

"Then stay with me. Let us talk." She looked at him affectionately and pointed to a low chair near her.

He drew it up until he could see her face as she spoke, and then sat down.

"What shall we talk about, mother?" he asked, with a smile.

"About yourself, if you like, my dear. That is, if you have anything that you know I would like to hear. I am not curious, am I, Orsino? I never ask you questions about yourself."

"No, indeed. You never tease me with questions, nor does my father either, for that matter. Would you really like to know what I am doing?"

"If you will tell me."

"I am building a house," said Orsino, looking at her to see the effect of the announcement.

"A house?" repeated Corona in surprise. "Where? Does your father know about it?"

"He said he did not care what I did." Orsino spoke rather bitterly.

"That does not sound like him, my dear. Tell me all about it. Have you quarrelled with him, or had words together?"

Orsino told his story quickly, concisely, and with a frankness he would perhaps not have shown to any one else in the world, for he did not even conceal his connection with Del Ferice. Corona listened intently, and her deep eyes told him plainly enough that she was interested. On his part he found an unexpected pleasure in telling her the tale, and he wondered why it had never struck him that his mother might sympathise with his plans and aspirations. When he had finished, he waited for her first word almost as anxiously as he would have waited for an expression of opinion from Maria Consuelo.

Corona did not speak at once. She looked into his eyes, smiled, patted his lean brown hand lovingly and smiled again before she spoke.

"I like it," she said at last. "I like you to be independent and determined. You might perhaps have chosen a better man than Del Ferice for your adviser. He did something once—well, never mind! It was long ago and it did us no harm."

"What did he do, mother? I know my father wounded him in a duel before you were married——"

"It was not that. I would rather not tell you about it; it can do no good, and after all, it has nothing to do with the present affair. He would not be so foolish as to do you an injury now. I know him very well. He is far too clever for that."

"He is certainly clever," said Orsino. He knew that it would be quite useless to question his mother further after what she had said. "I am glad that you do not think I have made a mistake in going into this business."

"No. I do not think you have made a mistake, and I do not believe that your father will think so either when he knows all about it."

"He need not have been so icily discouraging," observed Orsino.

"He is a man, my dear, and I am a woman. That is the difference. Was San Giacinto more encouraging than he? No. They think alike, and San Giacinto has an immense experience besides. And yet they are both wrong. You may succeed, or you may fail; I hope you will succeed, but I do not care much for the result. It is the principle I like, the idea, the independence of the thing. As I grow old, I think more than I used to do when I was young."

"How can you talk of growing old!" exclaimed Orsino indignantly.

"I think more," said Corona again, not heeding him. "One of my thoughts is that our old restricted life was a mistake for us, and that to keep it up would be a sin for you. The world used to stand still in those days, and we stood at the head of it, or thought we did. But it is moving now and you must move with it or you will

not only have to give up your place, but you will be left behind altogether."

"I had no idea that you were so modern, dearest mother," laughed Orsino. He felt suddenly very happy and in the best of humours with himself.

"Modern! No, I do not think that either your father or I could ever be that. If you had lived our lives you would see how impossible it is. The most I can hope to do is to understand you and your brothers as you grow up to be men. But I hate interference and I hate curiosity; the one breeds opposition and the other dishonesty; and if the other boys turn out to be as reticent as you, Orsino, I shall not always know when they want me. You do not realise how much you have been away from me since you were a boy, nor how silent you have grown when you are at home."

"Am I, mother? I never meant to be."

"I know it, dear, and I do not want you to be always confiding in me. It is not a good thing for a young man. You are strong, and the more you rely upon yourself the stronger you will grow. But when you want sympathy, if you ever do, remember that I have my whole heart full of it for you. For that, at least, come to me. No one can give you what I can give you, dear son."

Orsino was touched and pressed her hand, kissing it more than once. He did not know whether in her last words she had meant any allusion to Maria Consuelo, or whether, indeed, she had been aware of his intimacy with the latter. But he did not ask the question of her nor of himself. For the moment he felt that a want in his nature had been satisfied, and he wondered again why he had never thought of confiding in his mother.

They talked of his plans until it was late, and from that time they were more often together than before, each growing daily more proud of the other, though perhaps Orsino had better reasons for his pride than Corona

could have found, for the love of mother for son is more comprehensive and not less blind than the passion of woman for man.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE short Roman season was advancing rapidly to its premature fall, which is on Ash Wednesday, after which it struggles to hold up its head against the overwhelming odds of a severely observed Lent, to revive only spasmodically after Easter and to die a natural death on the first warm day. In that year, too, the fatal day fell on the fifteenth of February, and progressive spirits talked of the possibility of fixing the movable Feasts and Fasts of the Church in a more convenient part of the calendar. Easter might be made to fall in June, for instance, and society need not be informed of its inevitable and impending return to dust and ashes until it had enjoyed a good three months, or even four, of what an eminent American defines as "brass, sass, lies and sin."

Rome was very gay that year, to compensate for the shortness of its playtime. Everything was successful, and every one was rich. People talked of millions less soberly than they had talked of thousands a few years earlier, and with less respect than they mentioned hundreds twelve months later. Like the vanity-struck frog, the *franc* blew itself up to the bursting-point, in the hope of being taken for the *louis*, and momentarily succeeded, even beyond its own expectations. No one walked, though horse-flesh was enormously dear, and a good coachman's wages amounted to just twice the salary of a government-clerk. Men who, six months earlier, had climbed ladders with loads of brick or mortar, were now transformed into flourishing sub-contractors, and drove about in smart pony-carts, looking the picture of Italian prosperity, rejoicing in the most flashy of ties, and smoking the

blackest and longest of long black cigars. During twenty hours out of the twenty-four the gates of the city roared with traffic. From all parts of the country labourers poured in, bundle in hand and tools on shoulder, to join in the enormous work and earn their share of the pay that was distributed so liberally. A certain man who believed in himself stood up and said that Rome was becoming one of the greatest of cities, and he smacked his lips and said that he had done it, and that the Triple Alliance was a goose which would lay many golden eggs. The believing bulls roared everything away before them, opposition, objections, financial experience, and the vanquished bears hibernated in secret places, sucking their paws and wondering what, in the name of Ursa Major and Ursa Minor, would happen next. Distinguished men wrote pamphlets in the most distinguished language to prove that wealth was a baby capable of being hatched artificially and brought up by hand. Every unmarried swain who could find a bride, married her forthwith; those who could not followed the advice of an illustrious poet and, being over-anxious to take wives, took those of others. Everybody was decorated. It positively rained decorations and hailed grand crosses, and enough commanders' ribbons were reeled out to have hanged half the population. The periodical attempt to revive the defunct carnival in the Corso was made, and the yet unburied corpse of ancient gaiety was taken out and painted, and gorgeously arrayed, and propped up in its seat to be a posthumous terror to its enemies, like the dead Cid. Society danced frantically and did all those things which it ought not to have done, and added a few more, unconsciously imitating Pico della Mirandola.

Even those comparatively few families who, like the Saracinesca, had scornfully declined to dabble in the whirlpool of affairs, did not by any means refuse to dance to the music of

success which filled the city with such enchanting strains. The Princess Befana rose from her death-bed with more than usual vivacity and went to the length of opening her palace on two evenings in two successive weeks, to the intense delight of her gay and youthful heirs, who earnestly hoped that the excitement might kill her at last, and kill her beyond resurrection this time. But they were disappointed. She still dies periodically in winter and blooms out again in spring with the poppies, affording a perpetual and edifying illustration of the changes of the year, or, as some say, of the doctrine of immortality. On one of those memorable occasions she walked through a quadrille with the aged Prince Saracinesca, whereupon Sant' Ilario slipped his arm round Corona's waist and waltzed with her down the whole length of the ballroom and back again amidst the applause of his contemporaries and their children. If Orsino had had a wife he would have followed their example. As it was, he looked rather gloomily in the direction of a silent and high-born damsel with whom he was condemned to dance the cotillon at a later hour.

So all went gaily on until Ash Wednesday extinguished the social flame, suddenly and beyond relighting. And still Orsino did not meet Maria Consuelo, and still he hesitated to make another attempt to find her at home. He began to wonder whether he should ever see her again, and as the days went by he almost wished that Donna Tullia would send him a card for her Lenten evenings, at which Maria Consuelo regularly assisted, as he learned from the papers. After that first invitation to dinner, he had expected that Del Ferice's wife would make an attempt to draw him into her circle; and, indeed, she would probably have done so had she followed her own instinct instead of submitting to the higher policy dictated by her husband. Orsino waited in vain, not knowing whether to be annoyed at the lack of consideration bestowed upon him, or

to admire the tact which assumed that he would never wish to enter the Del Ferice circle.

It is presumably clear that Orsino was not in love with Madame d'Aranjuez, and he himself appreciated the fact with a sense of disappointment. He was amazed at his own coldness, and at the indifference with which he had submitted to what amounted to a most abrupt dismissal. He even went so far as to believe that Maria Consuelo had repulsed him designedly in the hope of kindling a more sincere passion. In that case she had been egregiously mistaken, he thought. He felt a curiosity to see her again before she left Rome, but it was nothing more than that. A new and absorbing interest had taken possession of him which at first left little room in his nature for anything else. His days were spent in the laborious study of figures and plans, broken only by occasional short but amusing conversations with Andrea Contini. His evenings were generally passed among a set of people who did not know Maria Consuelo except by sight and who had long ceased to ask him questions about her. Of late, too, he had missed his daily visits to her less and less, until he hardly regretted them at all, nor so much as thought of the possibility of renewing them. He laughed at the idea that his mother should have taken the place of a woman whom he had begun to love, and yet he was conscious that it was so, though he asked himself how long such a condition of things could last. Corona was far too wise to discuss his affairs with his father. He was too like herself for her to misunderstand him, and if she regarded the whole matter as perfectly harmless and as a legitimate subject for general conversation, she yet understood perfectly that having been once rebuffed by Sant' Ilario, Orsino must wish to be fully successful in his attempt before mentioning it again to the latter. And she felt so strongly in sympathy with her son that his work gradually

acquired an intense interest for her, and she would have sacrificed much rather than see it fail. She did not on that account blame Giovanni for his discouraging view when Orsino had consulted him. Giovanni was the passion of her life and was not fallible in his impulses, though his judgment might sometimes be at fault in technical matters for which he cared nothing. But her love for her son was as great and sincere in its own way, and her pride in him was such as to make his success a condition of her future happiness.

Corona had assuredly little reason to complain of her lot during the past twenty years, but unruffled and perfect as it had seemed to her she began to see that there were sources of sorrow and satisfaction before her which had not yet poured their bitter or sweet streams into the stately river of her mature life. The new interest which Orsino had created for her became more and more absorbing, and she watched it and tended it, and longed to see it grow to greater proportions. The situation was strange in one way at least. Orsino was working and his mother was helping him to work in the hope of a financial success which neither of them wanted or cared for. Possibly the certainty that failure could entail no serious consequences made the game a more amusing if a less exciting one to play.

"If I lose," said Orsino to her, "I can only lose the few thousands I invested. If I win, I will give you a string of pearls as a keepsake."

"If you lose, dear boy," answered Corona, "it must be because you had not enough to begin with. I will give you as much as you need, and we will try again."

They laughed happily together. Whatever chanced, things must turn out well. Orsino worked very hard, and Corona was very rich in her own right and could afford to help to any extent she thought necessary. She could, indeed, have taken the part of the bank and advanced him all the money he

needed, but it seemed useless to interfere with the existing arrangements.

In Lent the house had reached an important point in its existence. Andrea Contini had completed the Gothic roof and the turret which appeared to him in the first vision of his dream, but to which the defunct baker had made objections on the score of expense. The masons were almost all gone and another set of workmen were busy with finer tools moulding cornices and laying on the snow-white stucco. Within, the joiners and carpenters kept up a ceaseless hammering.

One day Andrea Contini walked into the office after a tour of inspection, with a whole cigar, unlighted and intact, between his teeth. Orsino was well aware from this circumstance that something unusually fortunate had happened or was about to happen, and he rose from his books, as soon as he recognised the fair-weather signal.

"We can sell the house whenever we like," said the architect, his bright brown eyes sparkling with satisfaction.

"Already!" exclaimed Orsino who, though equally delighted at the prospect of such speedy success, regretted in his heart the damp walls and the constant stir of work which he had learned to like so well.

"Already—yes. One needs luck like ours! The count has sent a man up in a cab to say that an acquaintance of his will come and look at the building to-day between twelve and one with a view to buying. The sooner we look out for some fresh undertaking, the better. What do you say, Don Orsino?"

"It is all your doing, Contini. Without you I should still be standing outside and watching the mattings flapping in the wind, as I did on that never-to-be-forgotten first day."

"I conceive that a house cannot be built without an architect," answered Contini laughing, "and it has always been plain to me that there can be no architects without houses to build. But as for any especial credit to me, I

refute the charge indignantly. I except the matter of the turret, which is evidently what has attracted the buyer. I always thought it would. You would never have thought of a turret, would you, Don Orsino?"

"Certainly not, nor of many other things," answered Orsino, laughing. "But I am sorry to leave the place. I have grown into liking it."

"What can one do? It is the way of the world—'*lieto ricordo d'un amor che fù*,'" sang Contini in the thin but expressive falsetto which seems to be the natural inheritance of men who play upon stringed instruments. He broke off in the middle of a bar and laughed, out of sheer delight at his own good fortune.

In due time the purchaser came, saw, and actually bought. He was a problematic personage with a disquieting nose, who spoke few words but examined everything with an air of superior comprehension. He looked keenly at Orsino but seemed to have no idea who he was and put all his questions to Contini.

After agreeing to the purchase he inquired whether Andrea Contini and Company had any other houses of the same description building, and if so where they were situated, adding that he liked the firm's way of doing things. He stipulated for one or two slight improvements, made an appointment for a meeting with the notaries on the following day, and went off with a rather unceremonious nod to the partners. The name he left was that of a well-known capitalist from the south, and Contini was inclined to think he had seen him before, but was not certain.

Within a week the business was concluded, the buyer took over the mortgage as Orsino and Contini had done and paid the difference in cash into the bank, which deducted the amounts due on notes of hand before handing the remainder to the two young men. The buyer also kept back a small part of the purchase-money to be paid on taking possession, when the

house was to be entirely finished. Andrea Contini and Company had realised a considerable sum of money.

"The question is, what to do next?" said Orsino thoughtfully.

"We had better look about us for something promising," said his partner. "A corner lot in this same quarter. Corner houses are more interesting to build and people like them to live in because they can see two or three ways at once. Besides, a corner is always a good place for a turret. Let us take a walk; smoking and strolling we shall find something."

"A year ago, no doubt," answered Orsino, who was becoming worldly wise. "A year ago that would have been well enough. But listen to me. That house opposite to ours has been finished some time, yet nobody has bought it. What is the reason?"

"It faces north and not south, as ours does, and it has not a Gothic roof."

"My dear Contini, I do not mean to say that the Gothic roof has not helped us very much, but it cannot have helped us alone. How about those two houses together at the end of the next block? Balconies, travertine columns, superior doors and windows, spaces for hydraulic lifts and all the rest of it. Yet no one buys. Dry, too, and almost ready to live in, and all the joinery of pitch pine. There is a reason for their ill luck."

"What do you think it is?" asked Contini, opening his eyes.

"The land on which they are built was not in the hands of Del Ferice's bank, and the money that built them was not advanced by Del Ferice's bank, and Del Ferice's bank has no interest in selling the houses themselves. Therefore they are not sold."

"But surely there are other banks in Rome, and private individuals——"

"No, I do not believe that there are," said Orsino with conviction. "My cousin of San Giacinto thinks that the selling days are over, and I fancy he is right, except about Del Ferice, who is cleverer than any of us. We had

better not deceive ourselves, Contini. Del Ferice sold our house for us, and unless we keep with him we shall not sell another so easily. His bank has a lot of half-finished houses on its hands secured by mortgages which are worthless until the houses are habitable. Del Ferice wants us to finish those houses for him, in order to recover their value. If we do it, we shall make a profit. If we attempt anything on our own account we shall fail. Am I right or not?"

"What can I say? At all events you are on the safe side. But why has not the count given all this work to some old-established firm of his acquaintance?"

"Because he cannot trust any one as he can trust us, and he knows it."

"Of course I owe the count a great deal for his kindness in introducing me to you. He knew all about me before the baker died, and afterwards I waited for him outside the Chambers one evening and asked him if he could find anything for me to do, but he did not give me much encouragement. I saw you speak to him and get into his carriage—was it not you?"

"Yes, it was I," answered Orsino, remembering the tall man in an overcoat who had disappeared in the dusk on the evening when he himself had first sought Del Ferice. "Yes, and you see we are both under a sort of obligation to him which is another reason for taking his advice."

"Obligations are humiliating," exclaimed Contini impatiently. "We have succeeded in increasing our capital,—your capital, Don Orsino—let us strike out for ourselves."

"I think my reasons are good," said Orsino quietly. "And as for obligations, let us remember that we are men of business."

It appears from this that the low-born Andrea Contini and the high and mighty Don Orsino Saracinesca were not very far from exchanging places so far as prejudice was concerned. Contini noticed the fact and smiled.

"After all," he said, "if you can

accept the situation, I ought to accept it too."

"It is a matter of business," said Orsino, returning to his argument. "There is no such thing as obligation where money is borrowed on good security and a large interest is regularly paid."

It was clear that Orsino was developing commercial instincts. His grandfather would have died of rage on the spot if he could have listened to the young fellow's cool utterances. But Contini was not pleased and would not abandon his position so easily.

"It is very well for you, Don Orsino," he said, vainly attempting to light his cigar. "You do not need the money as I do. You take it from Del Ferice because it amuses you to do so, not because you are obliged to accept it. That is the difference. The count knows it too, and knows that he is not conferring a favour but receiving one. You do him an honour in borrowing his money. He lays me under an obligation in lending it."

"We must get money somewhere," answered Orsino with indifference. "If not from Del Ferice, then from some other bank. And as for obligations, as you call them, he is not the bank himself, and the bank does not lend its money in order to amuse me or to humiliate you, my friend. But if you insist, I shall say that the convenience is not on one side only. If Del Ferice supports us it is because we serve his interests. If he has done us a good turn, it is a reason why we should do him one, and build his houses rather than those of other people. You talk about my conferring a favour upon him. Where will he find another Andrea Contini and Company to make worthless property valuable for him? In that sense you and I are earning his gratitude, by the simple process of being scrupulously honest. I do not feel in the least humiliated, I assure you."

"I cannot help it," replied Contini, biting his cigar savagely. "I have a

heart, and it beats with good blood. Do you know that there is blood of Cola di Rienzi in my veins?"

"No. You never told me," answered Orsino, one of whose forefathers had been concerned in the murder of the Tribune, a fact to which he thought it best not to refer at the present moment.

"And the blood of Cola di Rienzi burns under the shame of an obligation!" cried Contini, with a heat hardly warranted by the circumstances. "It is humiliating, it is base, to submit to be the tool of a Del Ferice; we all know who and what Del Ferice was, and how he came by his title of count, and how he got his fortune,—a spy, an intriguer! In a good cause? Perhaps. I was not born then, nor you either, Signor Principe, and we do not know what the world was like when it was quite another world. That is not a reason for serving a spy!"

"Calm yourself, my friend. We are not in Del Ferice's service."

"Better to die than that! Better to kill him at once and go to the galleys for a few years! Better to play the fiddle, or pick rags, or beg in the streets than that, Signor Principe. One must respect one's self. You see it yourself. One must be a man, and feel as a man. One must feel those things here, Signor Principe, here in the heart!"

Contini struck his breast with his clenched fist and bit the end of his cigar quite through in his anger. Then he suddenly seized his hat and rushed out of the room.

Orsino was less surprised at the outburst than might have been expected, and did not attach any great weight to his partner's dramatic rage. But he lit a cigarette and carefully thought over the situation, trying to find out whether there were really any ground for Contini's first remarks. He was perfectly well aware that as Orsino Saracinesca he would cut his own throat with enthusiasm rather than borrow a louis of Ugo Del Ferice. But as Andrea Contini and Company he was another person, and so Del Ferice was not

Count Del Ferice, nor the Onorevole Del Ferice, but simply a director in a bank with which he had business. If the interests of Andrea Contini and Company were identical with those of the bank, there was no reason whatever for interrupting relations both amicable and profitable, merely because one member of the firm claimed to be descended from Cola di Rienzi, a defunct personage in whom Orsino felt no interest whatever. Andrea Contini, considering his social relations, might be on terms of friendship with his hatter, for instance, or might have personal reasons for disliking him. In neither case could the buying of a hat from that individual be looked upon as an obligation conferred or received by either party. This was quite clear, and Orsino was satisfied.

"Business is business," he said to himself, "and people who introduce personal considerations into a financial transaction will get the worst of the bargain."

Andrea Contini was apparently of the same opinion, for when he entered the room again at the end of an hour his excitement had quite disappeared.

"If we take another contract from the count," he said, "is there any reason why we should not take a larger one, if it is to be had? We could manage three or four buildings now that you have become such a good book-keeper."

"I am quite of your opinion," Orsino answered, deciding at once to make no reference to what had gone before.

"The only question is, whether we have capital enough for a margin."

"Leave that to me."

Orsino determined to consult his mother, in whose judgment he felt a confidence which he could not explain but which was not misplaced. The fact was simple enough. Corona understood him thoroughly, though her comprehension of his business was more than limited, and she did nothing in reality but encourage his own sober opinion when it happened to be at variance with some enthusiastic inclina-

tion which momentarily deluded him. That quiet pushing of a man's own better reason against his half-considered but often headstrong impulses, is after all one of the best and most loving services which a wise woman can render to a man whom she loves, be he husband, son, or brother. Many women have no other secret, and indeed there are few more valuable ones, if well used and well kept. But let not graceless man discover that it is used upon him. He will resent being led by his own reason far more than being made the senseless slave of a foolish woman's wildest caprice. To select the best of himself for his own use is to trample upon his free will. To send him barefoot to Jericho in search of a dried flower is to appeal to his heart. Man is a reasoning animal.

Corona, as was to be expected, was triumphant in Orsino's first success, and spent as much time in talking over the past and the future with him as she could command during his own hours of liberty. He needed no urging to continue in the same course, but he enjoyed her happiness and delighted in her encouragement.

"Contini wishes to take a large contract," he said to her, after the interview last described. "I agree with him, in a way. We could certainly manage a larger business."

"No doubt," Corona answered thoughtfully, for she saw that there was some objection to the scheme in his own mind.

"I have learned a great deal," he continued, "and we have much more capital than we had. Besides I suppose you would lend me a few thousands if we needed them, would you not, mother?"

"Certainly, my dear. You shall not be hampered by want of money."

"And then, it is possible that we might make something like a fortune in a short time. It would be a great satisfaction. But then, too——" He stopped.

"What then?" asked Corona, smiling.

"Things may turn out differently. Though I have been successful this time, I am much more inclined to believe that San Giacinto was right than I was before I began. All this movement does not rest on a solid basis."

A financier of thirty years' standing could not have made the statement more impressively, and Orsino was conscious that he was assuming an elderly tone. He laughed the next moment.

"That is a stock phrase, mother," he continued; "but it means something. Everything is not what it should be. If the demand were as great as people say it is, there would not be half-a-dozen houses, better houses than ours, unsold in our street. That is why I am afraid of a big contract. I might lose all my money and some of yours."

"It would not be of much consequence if you did," answered Corona. "But you will be guided by your own judgment, which is much better than mine. One must risk something, of course, but there is no use in going into danger."

"Nevertheless, I should enjoy a big venture immensely."

"There is no reason why you should not try one, when the moment comes, my dear. I suppose that a few months will decide whether there is to be a crisis or not. In the meantime you might take something moderate, neither so small as the last, nor so large as you would like. You will get more experience, risk less, and be better prepared for a crash if it comes, or to take advantage of anything favourable if business grows safer."

Orsino was silent for a moment. "You are very wise, mother," he said. "I will take your advice."

Corona had indeed acted as wisely as she could. The only flaw in her reasoning was her assertion that a few months would decide the fate of Roman affairs. If it were possible to predict a crisis even within a few months, speculation would be a less precarious business than it is.

Orsino and his mother might have talked longer and perhaps to better purpose, but they were interrupted by the entrance of a servant, bearing a note. Corona instinctively put out her hand to receive it.

"For Don Orsino," said the man, stopping before him.

Orsino took the letter, looked at it and turned it over.

"I think it is from Madame d'Aranjuez," he remarked, without emotion. "May I read it?"

"There is no answer, Eccellenza," said the servant, whose curiosity was satisfied.

"Read it, of course," said Corona, looking at him.

She was surprised that Madame d'Aranjuez should write to him, but she was still more astonished to see the indifference with which he opened the missive. She had imagined that he was more or less in love with Maria Consuelo. "I fancy it is the other way," she thought. "The woman wants to marry him. I might have suspected it."

Orsino read the note, and tossed it into the fire without volunteering any information.

"I will take your advice, mother," he said, continuing the former conversation, as though nothing had happened. But the subject seemed to be exhausted, and before long Orsino made an excuse to his mother and went out.

(*To be continued.*)

SOME GREAT BIOGRAPHIES.

It is one of the best worn of commonplaces that there is no book so generally interesting as a well done biography, and none which is so rarely well done or so difficult to do well. But there is often a good deal of truth in commonplaces, and there is a very great deal of it in this. Putting aside books read owing to some fashion or fancy of the time, and those which lend themselves to reading simply because they require absolutely no knowledge or intelligence in those who read them, and those in which positive genius insists upon attention being paid to it, no books have been so steadily popular with the best class of readers as the great biographies. On the other hand an undeviating consensus of critics (whose natural depravity could hardly have avoided slipping into truth now and then if their opinion was feigned) agrees that nothing is so bad as the average biography. It may not be unamusing or unprofitable to take some admittedly successful examples and endeavour to see what makes them good; it will certainly not be difficult to discern and indicate in passing what makes the others bad.

All biography is obviously and naturally divided into two kinds. There is the biography pure and simple, in which the whole of the materials is passed through the alembic of the biographer, and in which few if any of these materials appear except in an altered and digested condition. This, though apparently the oldest, is artistically the most perfect kind. Its shortest examples are always its best, and some of the best and shortest are among the best things in literature. The *Agricola* of Tacitus at one end of the list and Southey's *Nelson* almost at the other

may save us the trouble of a long enumeration of the masterpieces; while nobody needs to be told that the list ranges from masterpieces like these down to those that *ego vel Cluvienus* may write. There has always been a considerable demand for this sort of thing; but it is not quite the kind of biography which has been specially popular for the last century, and which has produced the famous books to which I have already alluded. This is the kind of "applied" or "mixed" biography, including letters from and to the hero, anecdotes about him, and the like, connected and wrought into a whole by narrative and comment of the author, or, as he sometimes calls himself, the editor. To this belong more or less wholly the great biographies which I shall take for texts, Boswell's *Johnson*, Moore's *Byron*, Lockhart's *Scott*, Carlyle's *Sterling* (much smaller than the others, for reasons, but distinctly on the same lines with them), and, of books quite recent, Sir George Trevelyan's *Macaulay*. And to this class also, for reasons very easy to understand, belong almost all the biographies recently produced of men recently living. The reasons I say are easy to find. There is the great popularity of the great examples: there is the demand arising from this popularity; but most of all there is the fatal facility of the proceeding in appearance, and in appearance only.

There can of course be no doubt that to the inexperienced it looks easy enough. In the first kind of biography the writer must to some extent master a considerable quantity of matter, and subject it to some kind of intellectual or quasi-intellectual process of his own. At the very worst, the absolutely least, he must

frame a sufficient number of sentences in his own head and (unless he dictates) write them with his own fingers,—a number sufficient to fill the space between the covers of the book. And, unless he is a quite abnormally stupid or conceited man, he will be more or less conscious that he is doing this well or ill, sufficiently or insufficiently. He cannot to any great extent merely extract or quote. He must create, or at any rate build, or do something that may at least cheat himself into the idea that he is building or creating.

The second path is in comparison quite a primrose one. In most cases the biographer by hypothesis finds himself in possession of a certain, often a considerable, stock of material in the way of diaries, letters and what not. Even if he has struck out the notion of the book for himself and is not ready furnished with his materials by executors, appointment of friends, and the like, his own unskilled labour or that of a few jackals at public and other libraries will generally stock him amply with all the stuff he wants. Very often this stuff is, in part at least, really interesting. What more simple than to calendar it; to omit whatever is more than is wanted to fill the one, two or three volumes ordered or accepted by the publisher; to string the rest together with a "John a Nokes was born on the —th of —. Of his earliest years we find," and so on; to insert here and there a reference, a reminiscence, a reflection, or a connecting narrative; and, if the operator be very conscientious, to wind up with an appreciation or summary, "We have thus followed a remarkable (or a painful, as the case may be) career to its close. Had this," and so forth. What more simple?

"It is not more stiff than that," says the engaging idiom of the Gaul. At any rate there is certainly a large and apparently an increasing number of persons, many of them educated, presumably not unintelligent, certainly

not unacquainted with books, things, and men, who consider that there is no greater "stiffness" in it. Any competent critic, even any tolerably intelligent reader who dutifully studies or skims his new volumes from Mudie's, could name books of this kind within the last few years, nay, within the last few months, some of which had no justification whatever for their existence; others which a really skilful hand would have reduced to a small volume or even to an ordinary quarterly essay; others which, though capable of having been made into books of the right sort by the right treatment, had only been made into books of the wrong sort by the wrong treatment. Anybody on the other hand who remembers any thoroughly satisfactory book of the kind for some years past must either be a much more fortunate or a much less fastidious reader and critic than I can pretend to be. Let us therefore turn over once more those famous biographies of the kind that are good, and see if the secrets of their goodness are capable of being disengaged.

It will be evident, and may possibly have been already objected by some thorough-going Boswellian, that the first, and as he would say the greatest, has some marked differences from the others. This may be partly due to the fact that Boswell had practically no model when he wrote his extraordinary book, while the others all wrote with that book more or less consciously before them. It may be due also to the other fact that for by far the greater part of his hero's life he did not know him at all; while for the rest he had exceptionally full stores of personal communication to draw upon. A considerable variation of treatment was therefore almost of necessity imposed on him. To generalise about Boswell is a very perilous task. Almost everything possible has been said: and most, or at least many, of these things clash and hurtle like the elements in chaos. I shall give no opinion here whether Boswell was the

specially-inspired zany of Macaulay, or the man of some foibles but of good brain and heart on the whole, and of an intelligent rather than blind devotion to his master, whom Carlyle preferred and who has been of late years more and more the favourite. I do not myself pretend to rank in the most ardent section of Boswellians. Full of delightful matter as the book is, it seems to me a book rather for perpetual dips,—dips which should leave no part of it unexplored, but interrupted and comparatively short—than for the long steady swim which the very greatest literary streams invite, sustain, and make delightful. It would indeed scarcely be possible for even the most rapid reader to read Boswell or Lockhart or Moore through at a sitting, unless it were as long as the gambling sederunt in *The Young Duke*. But I have read Lockhart often, and I hope to read him often again, on successive evenings from beginning to end. I have read Moore at least once if not twice through in the same way, besides countless dippings into both. I have never succeeded, and I have more than once failed, in reading Boswell through on the same plan.

This however may be my fault, not Boswell's; and I am sure that there is not a page of him that I have not read, and that often, with delight. For he had, and he revealed to the others, the secret of this kind of biography. And he had it, if not so much as Lockhart (who seems to me the prince of all biographers, past, present, and to come), much more than any of those others, though they had it too. This secret consists in fixing the attention of the reader, even if it be unconsciously, at once on the character of the subject; and, so far as possible, never giving a touch afterwards which does not in some way fill out and fill up that character. The satire poured on Bozzy's minuteness by Wolcott and others is often (in Wolcott himself at least) admirably good fun, and not always quite

unjust from certain points of view. And yet if we pause and with hand on heart ask ourselves, "Is the most trivial of these trivialities really superfluous?" it will be very difficult to answer in the affirmative. There is hardly one incident, there is hardly one saying of Johnson's, there is even hardly one of those astounding platitudes or sillinesses of Bozzy's own which support the "zany" theory, that does not in some subtle and cunning fashion elaborate and furnish forth that extraordinary personality which some will have to be the most faithful portraiture of a human being that we possess in books, and others the most astonishing example of an *eidolon* heightened and transcendentalised by art. I have no doubt that much of Boswell's attraction for the extreme Boswellians consists in what his earliest thoroughgoing defender would have called his "marine-stores" of detail about all sorts of things and persons besides Johnson. No one except Horace Walpole has given us such a collection of *ana in excelsis*, of miscellanies miscellanied into quintessence, as Boswell; and Horace lacks the central tie-beams that Bozzy provides. For yet once more it must be said that in Boswell the whole has a tendency and an aim, a tendency which reaches its end, an aim which is hit by the archer. It is in this that the supremacy of Boswell's art consists. Apparently desultory, he is never really so; apparently sucking in everything and disgorging everything by turns with the indiscriminating action of a whirlpool, he is really subjecting the whole to a cunning chemical process.

How different the process, or at least how different the success is in the case of the other, the bad and even the less good biographies the memory, full of fright "of many a double-volumed night", shall easily tell us. In the selection and editing of documents and in the construction of linking narrative we shall find better models among the biographers referred

to than Boswell. But we shall nowhere find a better, I am not quite sure that we shall anywhere find one so good, in this central requirement of always keeping the character of the subject before the reader, and building up the notion of it with here a little and there a little of successive detail and touch. It may be that Boszy had so steeped himself in Johnson that he at last thought and saw all things in Johnson; and that everything extraneous to that subject naturally dropped off and became unimportant to him. But this would be only a scientific, not a critical, explanation of the fact; and the fact itself remains. Now the very last thing that we find in the average modern biographer is this omnipresence of the subject in its quiddity. The biographer may be earnestly, even tediously, desirous to put a certain side, or what he thinks a certain side, of his subject before us. But "the whole," as Empedocles (not Mr. Arnold's but the man himself) said, "few boast to find." We turn over pages of surplusage, pages of repetition, pages of triviality; but the central idea and personality of the man, the idea that disengages itself, once for all and unmistakably, from the pages of Boswell, we are either altogether baffled in seeking, or have to piece and patch out laboriously for ourselves. There may be amusing stories about the subject, or about other people: there may be meritorious bursts of original writing from the author or editor; but the central idea, the central tie-beam, is too often wanting. There is no composition, and therefore there is no art. In Boswell there is this composition, though it is of a very peculiar and perhaps a not easily imitable kind.

The next book in chronological order, Moore's *Byron*, has very different lessons to teach. It must of course be judged in the first place with a most unusual amount of allowance. The mere circumstances of the antecedent destruction of the Memoirs imposed upon Moore such a necessity

of dancing in fetters that probably, if poverty, and perhaps a little vanity combined, had not dictated to will, he never would have consented to undertake the exercise. He wrote too soon after Byron's death not to have been, even if this most harassing condition had been absent, encumbered by innumerable considerations of this person's feelings, of what that person had written, of what the moral British public still thought, of what the enthusiastic British public still felt. Frequent as are Byron's own laudations of Moore's attitude towards "the great," and creditable as on the whole that attitude must be pronounced to have been, Moore suffered under various personal disabilities in grappling with his task. He was an Irishman writing of English society, a somewhat irregularly educated Irishman dealing with English public-school and university education; a Whig writing of a period of almost unbroken Tory domination; a reformed Thomas Little writing of a rather unreformed Don Juan. But he was a man of thorough literary faculty, and literary faculty (which is a branch of wisdom) is, like wisdom, justified of her children in all ways and at all seasons. He had, in those letters and other documents of Byron's which had escaped the flames, illustrative matter of unsurpassed interest; for there is a practical agreement between the admirers and the depreciators of Byron's poetry, that his prose letters are among the very best of their kind. Moore had, moreover, a central subject which, if not in the least enigmatic, was intensely individual, and concerning which the intensest curiosity was entertained by his readers. With a man of the great literary faculty already mentioned this conflict of drawbacks and advantages was certain to produce something notable. The book is indeed full of faults, all of which (with some things which are not faults at all) may be found censured in his most florid style by Wilson in the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*. It

was a mistake, at least as obvious as the reason for it, to be excessively reticent as to the poet's English freaks and unnecessarily loquacious as to his Italian dissipations. It was a worse mistake to drop the pen of the biographer now and then, and thump the cushion of the preacher, an exercise which suited the genial Thomas uncommonly ill. It was a still more unwise extension of that mistake to indulge in abstract discussions about education, marriage, and what not, for which Moore (who was one of the worst hands in the world at abstract dissertation) was very badly equipped, and which, if they had been handled by a combination of Solomon and Berkeley, would still have been out of place in the particular book. It would be quite easy to pick other and lesser faults all through. But who that reads the book with heart's as well as mind's eye cares to do any such thing? Here too we have the main and principal thing, which was in this case to let the subject speak for himself. One of the more legitimate faults which may be found with Moore is that he has not edited quite enough, that he has frequently allowed Byron (who like most letter-writers from foreign parts necessarily had to repeat himself to his various correspondents) to appear in the book as tautologous to a rather unjust extent. But even in this there is justification for the biographer. He knew, being a man of letters and a great man of letters, that what was wanted was precisely this, to let Byron speak for himself. There had been endless speaking *about* him.

God's great gift of speech abused
Made the memory confused

of almost everybody on the subject. Moore had been prevented from giving full liberty of speech to his client even in this instance; so, as I hold, like a judicious advocate he gave the fullest liberty that he could in the matter left to him. At any rate he too earns the meed due to the thorough

painting of the portrait, the finished construction of the character. We have had all manner of "real Lord Byrons", and of false Lord Byrons, since; we have had things that Moore might have told us had he chosen and been free to speak, and things that he was too sensible to tell however free his tongue had been. But it may be safely said that nothing that can ever come out will be incompatible with the Lord Byron made known to us by Moore. He is done, like Pantagruel, *dans son naturel*; and the natural or unnatural additions will be found to answer thereto.

Far different again is this procedure from that of the ordinary biographer. He copies Moore in giving us much unnecessary matter; he copies him in giving us far more unnecessary comment. The only things he does not copy him in are the excuses for these two faults and the merit which, were they far greater, would redeem them.

The next example seems to me, as I have already said, to be the capital example of the kind. It is true that Lockhart had everything in his favour. He had ample material; he had complete knowledge of it; he had a real affection for his subject; he had nothing to conceal; he had, if not the same sort of personal curiosity, half-genuine, half-morbid, which Moore had to cater for in the case of Byron, a general interest in his hero which has seldom been equalled and never exceeded. But in literature, as in other games, it is not sufficient to have cards; you must know how to play them. Lockhart played his admirable cards to even greater admiration. His play has indeed been subjected to tests that may be called hardly fair. The recent publication of Scott's complete *Diary* was such a test; and it is not necessary to dwell much on the triumphant fashion in which Lockhart emerged from it. Except a very little which for divers reasons he could not have published, and a very little more which on the whole it was better taste

for him not to publish, there may be said to have been absolutely nothing of interest or importance in the complete *Diary* which he had not given in his extracts. We had more in bulk, but we had nothing new in kind. We learnt nothing, and there was no fear of our learning anything, derogatory to Sir Walter and hitherto concealed; but we learnt also nothing favourable to him that had, either by maladroitness or bad faith, been held back. Some of the new matter was painful; almost all of it was superfluous.

But only they of little faith or little intelligence can have been much surprised or greatly relieved by this passage of Lockhart's through the ordeal. To any really good literary judge the thing was certain beforehand. This *Life* had the "certain vital marks." I am aware of course that, putting entirely aside the usual vague and intangible prejudice against Lockhart, some good and well-disposed judges have expressed themselves as not wholly satisfied with parts of his treatment, have considered him unfair to Constable and the Ballantynes and so forth. But the elaborate justification of Constable which was published some years ago left on my mind no feeling that Lockhart had treated him unfairly; and those who disapprove of the treatment of the Ballantynes, usually incriminate not the *Life* itself, but divers side controversies and appendices with which we have here nothing to do. What we have to do with is the presentation of the life and conversation of a great man on a great scale; and that this has never been done better I am sure, that it ever will be done better I find great difficulty in believing. The special point of the work is the unmatched combination of excellence in the selection and editing with excellence in the connecting narrative. Boswell's matter is delightful, and excellently arranged for his purpose. But whenever he becomes at all original he becomes (were it not for the pleasingness of his coxcombry and its advantages as a

set-off) a bore. Moore's dissertations are sometimes superfluous, and not always intrinsically very sound. In the examples to be noticed later Carlyle's monologue, as was his wont, has sometimes a habit of submerging Sterling; and the biographer is altogether so much greater a man than his subject, that there is an occasional sense of incongruity. Sir George Trevelyan, whose relation to his hero may be said to have been very similar to that of Lockhart to Scott, and who, like Lockhart, was fortunate in possessing abundant material, sometimes seems to have found himself a little cramped by the relationship, and nowhere seems to me to have quite attained the full and equable command both of his pen and his subject which is so remarkable in his predecessor.

It is in this full and equable command both of his materials and his own arrangement of them that Lockhart's unique excellence consists. He had to deal with an almost faultless subject,—for there is absolutely no stain on Scott's memory except his clandestine tradings with the Ballantynes, where it is evident that some strange delusion held him from the first as to the distinctly unprofessional, nay, as to the questionably honest, character of these relations. There was therefore a not inconsiderable danger that he should present (as so many biographers have presented to us) a faultless monster, or should busy himself in tedious endeavours to whitewash small faults into positive virtues. The best evidence that he has not done this is the almost incredible but actual fact that there have been people, both at the time and since, who have thought him unfair to Scott. The truth of course is that he has contrived with consummate art to let the character of his hero show itself as good but not in the least goody, as heroic but not in the least theatrical. Yet another distinguishing grace of this great book,—“the best book in the world” as a person who was not ignorant of

the other best books in the world once called it to me—is the singular skill with which the author, while never obtruding himself, never obtrusively effaces himself. He is often actually on the scene: he is constantly speaking in his own person; and yet we never think of him as the man with the pointing-stick at the panorama, as the beadle at the function, as the ring-master of the show. He seems to stand rather in the relation of the epic poet to his characters, narrating, omnipresent, but never in the way.

No other biographer, I repeat, seems to me to have reached quite this pitch of art. It is true that Bozzy plays monkey to his master's bear in a very diverting and effective manner; but still the relation may always be stigmatised by foes, and must sometimes be admitted even by friends, to be that of bear and monkey, a contrast diverting and effective, but almost too violent for the best art. There is nothing of this in the *Life of Scott*. Whether Scott is speaking for himself in the autobiography, the diary, and the letters; or whether Lockhart is speaking of and for him, the presentation is continuous, uniform, uninterrupted. Two phrases, often foolishly used but in their original meaning not only harmless but excellent, may be used in that original meaning of this book. It is "as interesting as a novel," and it is "as good as a play." That is (to translate these artless words into more elaborate phraseology), it has the uniform grasp, the sustained and absorbing attraction, of the best works of narrative and dramatic art. It is easy to say that this is due to the subject, that "all depends on the subject," and that here the subject is matchless. I think this can, as it happens, be rather crushingly rebutted by instance. I do not think that the appreciation of Moore above quoted is grudging. But let any one who knows the two books well ask himself soberly what Moore would have made of Scott, and what Lockhart would have made of Byron. As for the ordinary bio-

grapher it is perhaps too heartrending to think what he could have made, if he had given his mind to it, of either. Let any one who knows remember what Lord John Russell made of Moore himself, a subject not of course of the same interest as Scott or Byron, but of interest much above the common; let him remember much more recent instances of even more promising matter, treated by hardly less approved artists, and what came of them. Then, if he does not bless Lockhart and award the crown to him, I have nothing more to say but to repeat that I for my part know no book of the kind equal to this.

Here then we have something like the type and standard example of the elaborate biography of the composite kind, the kind which not stinting itself of any one possible sizing allowable to the biographer, admitting great portions of original matter, and permitting the subject to a great extent to illustrate himself, keeps a perpetual regulating hand on these materials, adjusts the connecting links of narrative and comment to one consistent plan of exposition, and so presents the subject "in the round," on all sides, in all lights, doing this not merely by ingenious management in the original part, but by severe and masterly selection in that which is not original. It has been rumoured from time to time that in addition to the *Diary* further instalments of the Abbotsford papers are to be given to the public. They can hardly be otherwise than welcome in themselves, though it seems idle to wish for the pinched-off clay, the marble chips, the bronze filings when you have the sculptor's finished statue. But after the crucial example of the *Diary* itself, I think it may be taken for granted that the results will be uniform whatever is published. We shall have no lower, but also no really fuller idea of Scott; and we shall have a higher idea of what Lockhart gave and did, by beholding what he deliberately refrained from doing and giving.

The next in order of our books is in a certain way the greatest, as in a certain other way the smallest, of all. But I do not think that the superlative belongs to it as a biography. Of its merits as a book there can be no question, and there never has been any with competent judges. It has sometimes indeed been thought the very best of Carlyle's books, or second only to *The French Revolution*. Its modest length kept the author from the voluminous digressions which beset him so easily; the frequent changes of scene, and the constant necessity for making more or less brief reference to distinguished or interesting persons, excited and fed his unrivalled power of description and characterisation to an extraordinary degree. The sense of battle (for the book begins, if it does not go on, as a polemic against Hare's view of Sterling) gave zest and spirit to the performance. And there can be little doubt that personal memories and affections helped likewise. The result is astonishingly happy. It is brief enough to be read at a moderate stretch; and for my part, often as I have read it, I have seldom been able to begin it again or even to consult it for a casual reference, without following it right through. Although full enough of the author's characteristic manner, it does not show his mannerism at anything like its furthest. The preaching is necessarily subdued; it is administered dramatically and in short doses. The whole is an inculcation of Carlylism no doubt; but it is effected by object-lessons, and with swift and variegated change of scene and character. The famous chapter on Coleridge (admittedly the masterpiece of the book if not of the author) is only the best of infinite good things. The Welsh sketches; the remarks on Cambridge and Sterling's friends there; the ingenious economy of the Torrijos episode, where the hapless expedition gets its full share of celebration and Sterling's own excessively unheroic part in it is skimmed without any dis-

honesty but with consummate art; the scores of portrait vignettes scattered about, and the admirable composition of all these things, make up such a book as few that the world's libraries contain.

Such a book; but such a biography? Here I am not so sure. You can of course see Sterling plainly enough in it, and a rather sorry sight you have of him. That Sterling was the first of all such as cannot "make up their minds to be damned" (in his biographer's words of another person for whom I have much more respect) and yet want better bread than is made of wheat by virtue of which they may be saved,—the father of all the melancholy brood that includes the Arthur Cloughs of real life and the Robert Elsmere of fiction—the conductor and coryphæus of the caitiff choir who sing undogmatic anthems to a Nehushtan of negation, should not perhaps count too much against him. And no wise man will bear too hardly on the fact of his having turned his back on a certain troublesome and probably dangerous business to which he had put his hand, in order to dry the tears of a "blooming young lady with black eyes." But it is too evident that Sterling, his physical health no doubt aggravating his metaphysical complaints, was a rather poor creature, not unamiable nor ungifted, but with no great originality in him, and without the slightest capacity for taking trouble in order to make up for the lack of originality. Very fortunate indeed was it for him that he was called upon to play no other part than that of an affluent consumptive dawdler, and that he died before youth had quite departed, and therefore before his consumptive dawdling had ceased to be pathetic and begun to be tiresome to his friends.

This is a brutal reduction to plain prose of Carlyle's portrait of him. But the mere fact that it will seem brutal shows on the one hand how skilful the painter is, and on the other that the merits of his picture are the

merits not of biography,—that is to say the presentation of a man as he is—but of romance, or the presentation of something as it is not. All through the book Carlyle plays Socrates to this poor friend of his (with very little fight in him at any time and with none left now) and protects him from the onset of the enemy. That he sometimes effects the rescue by concentrating our attention on himself, is part of the recognised procedure in such cases. But it is by no means always thus that he champions Sterling. I have not the slightest doubt that the variety and brilliancy of the scene-painting, the divergences into side portraits, and all the other purple patches referred to above, had a more or less conscious purpose of avoiding the concentration of too much attention by the reader on the nominal hero. The result no doubt is in a way triumphantly successful. The book has practically founded an immortal Sterling club; there will always be voices to sing *Tu Marcellus eras* in honour of Sterling, and I protest that I am rather ashamed of myself for having said what I believe to be the truth about him just now. Nor can it be said that the biographer may not smooth a little and apologise a good deal; especially where, as in Sterling's case, the faults are only weaknesses and wants. But still, if the standard of biography which has been set up earlier is at all a true one, Sterling never could have furnished a subject for one of the very best of biographies as such. There was simply not enough substance in him for one. And we shall accordingly find that what Carlyle with wonderful art has done is to reverse the tricks of the conjurers, and lead us to believe that we are reading a life of Sterling while Sterling is really "vanished," and we are actually reading an extraordinarily interesting history of the places that he lived in, the men he knew, the events which he shared or did not share, and the personality of his redoubtable and admira-

ble friend and biographer, all thrown up on a background of the shortcomings of the Church and State of England in the nineteenth century.

No two books could in this respect stand in much greater contrast to each other than the *Sterling* and Sir George Trevelyan's *Life and Letters of Macaulay*. The requirements of this last were entirely different; they were met with a just consciousness of their difference, and the result is a success of a perfectly different kind. Macaulay is still a difficult subject to handle. He had grave faults as a writer and some foibles as a man, accompanying great merits as a man and greater gifts as a writer. By an almost unexampled coincidence he has been depreciated by some in a manner which makes others forgive him where he ought not to be forgiven; and he has been admired by some in a way which makes others unduly shy of admiring him. But this applies to his writing chiefly. Speaking under correction, I should say that for some fifteen years after his death, the ideas of him among those who had not known him personally were pretty uniform, and not much more unfavourable among those who rather disliked his writings than among those who admired them. That is to say, he was thought of as an undoubtedly clever, a very generous, and an entirely honourable man, who had retained the faults of a clever and precocious boy,—“cocksureness,” inordinate loquacity, intolerance of fair give-and-take in conversation to a hardly tolerable degree,—a man whose “rough, pistolling ways” extended from literature into life, who was not too scrupulous about carrying personal and political antipathies into his writings and who was not only “cocksure” but also cock a hoop to a degree barely if at all excusable.

And I think it is also not too much to say that Sir George Trevelyan's biography changed this almost at once, changed it even for some who were rather prejudiced against Macaulay, and made it almost impossible for

any future generation which takes the trouble to acquaint itself with him at all to entertain that notion of him which Lord Melbourne's *mot*, the Windsor Castle incident, and a few other things had helped his writings to establish in the minds of the generation before. For it is, I venture to think, one of Sir George's amiable delusions to suppose that Macaulay's writings "give us no more idea of the author than Shakespeare's do." I should say myself that they give a very decided though, as it happens, a very false or at any rate a very incomplete idea of him. There is scarcely a page of the *Essays* or the *History* in which we do not seem to see a man of unquestionable knowledge and of equally unquestionable power, with no small range of sympathy and taste, but with a huge pair of blinkers on for everything and everybody with whom or with which he is not in sympathy, positive to or beyond the verge of arrogance, ready to pronounce and perhaps even to think every one who does not agree with him a fool or a knave or an egregious combination of both, never quite dishonest, but often quite unjust, with little real geniality even in his appreciation of humour, and with little real sympathy even in his appreciation of sentiment.

I do not know whether the family tradition was too strong in Sir George for him even to be aware of this notion of his uncle, which certainly existed at the time he wrote in persons neither infantine nor ill-blooded nor ill-informed. But he could have taken no happier way to substitute something better and juster for it than the way he actually took. The preface to the second edition shows that Sir George had the root of the biographical matter in him. "It was my business," says he, "to show my uncle as he was, and not as I or any one else would have had him." "Oh, brave we!" as Johnson himself might have said. Not of course that the principle extends to publishing *tacenda* of any kind. There are things

which are not disgraceful to a man to have done or written, but of which the publication is obviously unfair to him, which any biographer may suppress and which in some notable later examples of biography have not been suppressed, to the discredit of the subject in the minds of fools, of the biographer in the minds of the wise. But to quote, or rather to paraphrase Sir George again, if a faithful picture of the subject cannot be drawn without injuring his memory, let the drawing alone; if the drawing be undertaken, let it be faithful. Consider what would have happened if Sir George had set himself to cut away all the early priggishness, all the evidences of extreme partisanship in the Croker and other matters, if he had given us a Macaulay all family affection, all sweet reasonableness, all pathetic humanity, a trimmed, shorn, and varnished Macaulay. We should have revolted, we should have said that this was absurd, and we should have liked Macaulay even less than before. Whereas, by giving the rough with the smooth, and letting the man exhibit himself as he actually was, yet with no treacherous or unfair revelation, the revolution of opinion in the minds of some, the establishment once for all of a good opinion in those of others, was done and done thoroughly, so that it will never need to be done again and may defy not merely the critic but also the indiscreet busybody.

If anybody says that by much comparison of instances I have made clear two *secrets de Polichinelle*, first that the life of a man should give us the man and his life and not a collection of dead and inhuman things, secondly that a good life of a man will be found to have been well done itself, and done probably in a rather different way from any other, I bow to the remark. It is more and more becoming clear to me that the only secrets much worth finding out are *secrets de Polichinelle*, things already known to all the world. To convince

yourself of the obvious, neither to fail to see it for mere blindness like the fools, nor to fail to see it because of elaborate and persistent turning away from it like the clever ones, is certainly in these days, and perhaps has been in all, a very important and by no means an extremely simple task. Yet it may be pleaded that if the secret of writing biographies is known to all the world, a now very considerable part of that world (to wit, the writers of biographies) seem to be for the most part absolutely guiltless of the knowledge. And yet "Lives" are being more and more written. In the notes to his recently published translation of Heine's *Deutschland* Mr. Leland informs us that "in one of the best-known minor libraries in Europe" he "found two lives of a distinguished English poet and not a line of his works." It is entirely conceivable; it would not surprise me very much if he had said that he knew an author who had written one of the lives without having read a line of the works. Such things have happened, and are happening. But still, things being so, it might be supposed that the books for which there is such a demand would be supplied good. That would be a gross and grievous mistake. Demand may create supply; it certainly does not necessarily create good supply.

The examples I have taken are pretty well spread over the century (or rather less) in which they all appeared; and though the latest of them made its appearance so to speak yesterday, it is less satisfactory to remember that the subject of that life was born nearly at the extremity of the period. It is quite possible that the materials for biography are not so promising as they used to be. Some persons pretend that the cry about the decay of letter-writing is

nonsense. The cautious arguer will confine himself to replying that at any rate there are great temptations not to write letters. Telegrams, post-cards, correspondence-cards, letter-cards,—all of these things the truly good and wise detest and execrate; it is not quite so certain that they abstain from them. I believe that the habit of keeping a diary has really gone out to a great extent. Too often moreover nowadays the unauthorised person steps in with his privateering before the authorised person is ready for sea; and then the authorised person too often indulges in undignified chasings and cannonadings of his predecessor. Above all there seems to have been lost in this and other things the all-important sense of proportion in books. These things have had a bad effect on the class of persons who are likely to find biographers. One hears of their destroying materials with a, "Please God nobody shall deal with me as — dealt with —." Or else, as was the case with Cardinal Newman, they enjoin a method of dealing with their materials, which, though it permits any one of tolerable intelligence to construct a biography for himself with comparatively little difficulty, does not give him the biography. For it cannot be too often repeated that a real biography ought to be something more than the presentation of mere materials, however excellently calendared, something more than memoirs, letters, diary and so forth. The whole ought to be passed through the mind of a competent and intelligent artist, and to be presented to us, not indeed in such a way that we are bound to take his word for the details, but in such a way that we see a finished picture, a composition, not merely a mass of details and *data*.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY.

THE LEGEND OF LAPWATER HALL.

Down the river, beyond Hole Haven and Canvey Island, where the river becomes the sea, there lies on the Essex shore the quaint village of Leigh. Up the hill, beyond the church, the rooks hold noisy traffic, while Leigh hums slumberously below and the ships drive out round the Nore. It is by this way, and over certain fields of corn and beans, that one takes a short cut into the London Road.

When through the bars of the last gate he sees this white road, the wayfarer might pitch a stone against the wall of Lapwater Hall, were it not for the clump of trees on the left, which hides it and shelters the pond beside it. Leigh House is its more proper name, but to speak of it with a native it must still be Lapwater Hall. A native of these parts is mostly one who would at first sight be set down for a fisherman, did he not look at least as much like a farm-hand. His taste in drink is catholic, but inclines to mild ale; and there is only one known quarter whence an offer of that drink meets with his refusal. One there is, nevertheless.

At the beginning of the year 1751 Leigh House was falling to pieces. An old house, untenanted and neglected for years, it was scarce worth touching except to pull down. But early in that year, when all South Essex lay in ruts and mud, the folk about Leigh came by a piece of news. For a stranger came on an earless mare and bought Leigh House and farm.

Whence the stranger came no man knew. He had been seen riding through Hadleigh splashed to the wig with mud, and soon after he stopped before Leigh House. He was not a

handsome stranger; of middle height, but massive and ugly in shape like a prize bull-dog, with a coarse face and a squint. But he rode a fine brown mare, hard and useful as well as handsome, and well set on good legs; but odd and almost uncanny to look at because of her want of ears. Now in those times one might wait a twelve-month before seeing a stranger ride by Leigh House, let alone one on an earless mare. Wherefore Amos Tricker, who was hedging by the road when the mare stopped before him, stared mightily.

"What's this place?" asked the stranger.

A stranger on an earless mare was a startling thing enough, but a man who didn't know Leigh House, in sight of which Amos Tricker had spent his life, was astounding. Amos began to collect his thoughts.

"What the devil are you staring at? Damme! Is this Leigh House?"

Amos Tricker nodded feebly. The stranger put the brown mare over the falling paling and walked her round the rotten walls of the house. Then he trotted off Eastwood way with no further word, followed throughout by the stare of Amos Tricker until full a mile out of sight. After which Amos brought back his eyes to the hedge, dropped his knife and trudged away; the occasion demanding confabulation and a mug.

Now the stranger had been seen in Hadleigh, the next village, as I have said. And the good folk of Hadleigh, having larger opportunity and mutual aid, were in case to add more imaginative embellishment to his appearance than the single head of Amos Tricker

could easily conceive. Nevertheless, in all their varying descriptions of his broad frame, his long arms, his squint, his pistols, his brown mare, and his manner of asking the distance of Leigh House, there was no word of the mare's want of ears; and when Amos Tricker alluded to it, the improvement was disallowed by weight of numbers. The smith, who was a very old and very bow-legged man, and who sat permanently at his door while his son did what was to do in the smithy, appealed to the judgment of the company as to the likelihood of a mare with no ears passing his professional eye without his instant observation of the deficiency; and the company supported him, notwithstanding the valiant adherence of Amos Tricker to his own statement, continuing the discussion until by contrariety the mare was like to have four ears and the rider horns and a tail.

Then to the folk of Leigh and thereabout there came news traveling from Rochford by way of Eastwood. Mr. Gabriel Craddock had bought Leigh House and farm, and the house was to be rebuilt at once and in most uncommon haste. Before time had been allowed for a tithe of the proper canvass of this information, there descended upon Leigh House Mr. Gabriel Craddock himself, with the attorney from Rochford, and a master-builder; and Amos Tricker had triumphant vindication throughout Hadleigh, for Mr. Gabriel Craddock was the stranger; and the brown mare manifestly had no ears.

Then was a great measuring in and staking out, and knocking down and digging up, and in good time the red brick outline of the new house rose above ground. Time and again would come Mr. Craddock and critically inspect the work, grumbling unceasingly with strange oaths. In everything he found delay and a trick to cheat a too easy gentleman; and the language in which he expressed his opinions to

the bricklayers was something outrageously beyond what they had ever undergone from a foreman. It was uncommon strong, they held, even for a gentleman.

All this time Leigh learned little of Mr. Gabriel Craddock, and Leigh gossip fed on speculation. The brown mare with no ears brought its rider to and fro at irregular times, and the bricklayers were exposed to uncertain visitations. What became of Mr. Gabriel Craddock in the intervals was a mystery,—even the attorney had no notion. When he stayed at Leigh at all it was at the Smack Inn, where he would stable his mare and walk across to the house; and when he walked it was observed that from much riding he was more than a little bow-legged. His surly reserve and jealous exaction of respect drove the good neighbours to invention to keep the gossip fairly going. It was chiefly believed that he was a Government official, coming into these quiet parts to serve some ruthless purpose of the gaugers, the natural foes of half Leigh. Meg was the brown mare's name in truth; but why had she no ears? Questionless it was some part of a horse-taming charm,—something beyond the lunane and honey-cake that nobody doubted Meg had been already treated with. For the brown mare loved her master.

Now the journeymen who laid brick and rafter at Leigh House were stout men of Essex and good ale-fellows, who turned from no pot but an empty one. Wherefore it was provided in their hiring that they should have good beer in part wage, every man his two pots a day, for the humectation of his limy throat and the comfort of his stomach: in the fetching and carrying whereof old Amos Tricker was kept at a continual trot with a great wheelbarrow, receiving fair cess of his load in divers gulps bestowed, over and above what mayhap had spilled upon the drouthy way. For these were good brothers of the pot, and let no man stand thirsty by, al-

beit a mere half-gallon a day might seem little enough to spare from, God wot. And so they took their drink joyously together, every man with his nose in his own proper pot, thanking God it was no less, nor thinner.

Now though each man's lawful due was but two pots a day yet all looked to drink more on occasion. For past memory of any bricklayer or carpenter in Essex a visit on a work from the owner, the master's master, ever brought with it ale in plenty for the pledging of his good health and the luck of the new house. And often, were he a good fellow in his degree, the gentleman would take his own pot in the midst of them, and for that pot gentle and simple were good neighbours together. So that when Mr. Gabriel Craddock first came, and having sworn his hour or two, rode away leaving no sup of ale nor piece of money behind him, he was thought to err from forgetfulness; for men's faults should be judged with charity, and the gentleman was so free with his language that it was not fit he should be sparing with his liquor. But when he had come and gone again and again it was plain that Mr. Craddock was either illiberal or slow of apprehension, for notwithstanding many shrewd hints, in the way of wiping of heads, speaking across scaffoldings of the dryness of the day, and standing bottom-up of empty pots and cans, the master's wages-drink was all that was tasted.

And so it was until the walls were of full height and the last roof-beam was being fixed. Now the fixing of the last roof-beam is the occasion of great jollity and rejoicing in the building of all houses, and has been since houses were first made; and at that time by good and ancient precedent all men leave toil and drink at the charge of him whose house they build. Sometimes also they eat, but that is a matter of grace and not of the firm rule of honourable custom, which provides for good drink in any case, rather as a

right than as a kindness and courtesy. It chanced that as this last beam was being set in its place, Mr. Craddock looked on from below, and when in the end it rested as it should, and the workmen gave a cheer together and left their places, gathering before the house, he, not understanding the proceeding, and feeling no sentiment in the occasion, was about ordering them back to the proper use of their time; but was met by a respectful demand for the usual beer.

Mr. Craddock's squint intensified with ire. "Beer, ye boozy scabs! Ha'n't ye enough a'ready? Don't I pay for it, and for every minute of time ye rob me of, ye swabs, ye swill-pot hounds? There's the pond for ye. Go and lap water, like the lazy dogs ye are! Lap water, ye hounds; if more drink ye must have, lap water!"—and the convivial journeymen sneaked off chopfallen under a hurricane of oaths which sent Amos Tricker's daughter Nan, who was bringing a message, out of earshot aghast. Then Mr. Gabriel Craddock, with a furious promise to the master-builder that he would teach his men the respect due to a gentleman, and break the head of the next he caught loitering at his work or asking for beer, took himself off.

It was a sad defeat for those illustrious drinkers, the bricklayers and carpenters. Here was an immemorial precedent, a vested interest, a privilege of the craft, broken down at a blow. Insult had been added to injury and their dry throats had been referred to a pond, to which refreshment indeed they were like to be reduced, each man, in gleeful anticipation of that last beam, having disposed of his two pots early in the day. What could be done? Obviously the correct thing would have been a strike, had strikes been invented, but they had not. So the journeymen were fain to begin work again with ill-will and grumbling. It was the first house any man of them had worked on without

a single drink at the owner's expense ; all the comfort had gone out of the day with the two pots of ale, and—there was the ignoble suggestion of the pond !

"Tells us to lap watter, an' calls us swill-pot dogs," quoth one. "Mighty fond o' callin' names 'twould seem. Maybe'll call t' house Lapwatter Hall, an' folk'll know what t'expect."

The name touched his neighbour's fancy, and soon was passed on and banded up and down among the new walls and rafters, amid malicious grins and chuckles. At night the joke was carried to all the ale-houses within five miles. It was a poor joke, looked at from a severely critical standpoint, but Leigh folk were not severely critical in those days, and "Lapwater Hall" was hailed as an apt stroke of facetious nomenclature, and soon acquired general currency. So much so that by the time the wainscoting was well in hand, scarce a soul thought of calling the new house anything else. This the more readily because during the years of desolation there had arisen a Leigh House in the village hard by the church, properly the Black House, but holding the better-sounding title by spoliation from the wreck ; so that in the confusion between the old Leigh House that was the new house, and the new Leigh House that was the older of the two, a distinctive name was wanted somewhere, and Lapwater Hall did admirably. Lapwater Hall it soon was then, in all seriousness. And Mr. Gabriel Craddock's popularity did not grow.

This he knew nothing of, however, even if he cared. His affairs kept him much away, and his visits became few and short, to nobody's sorrow. But when the last dab of paint had been laid, and the builder's men betook themselves to more potent parts, Mr. Craddock arrived to take up residence. Nan Tricker, under the eye of Mrs. Dudit who was to keep house, had so well swept and tidied that the master could pick no fault until he

found her conversing blissfully over the side fence with Tim Ladds of the next farm. Those true lovers he parted summarily, and sent poor Nan about her kitchen duty.

The next day Mr. Craddock began to realise his unpopularity. The stables being ready, it was desirable to fetch Meg over from the Smack. And this he sallied forth to do, riding-whip in hand.

Down Lost Lane walked two men. "They're into Lapwatter Hall, 'twould seem," quoth one. Mr. Craddock looked round quickly ; he had not heard the sentence distinctly. Still he went across the stable-yard and gazed after those two men. Then he turned and thoughtfully walked out into the road and toward the bridlepath over the fields. These he surveyed with complacency. He was a country gentleman, with good land of his own, and a house and farm to make any man respected. Who the devil had stacked that rick ? He would visit its crookedness upon that person's head. And so he swaggered along. At the first gate he met a small boy with a basket. The boy, having no hat, pulled his forelock, and held back the gate. "What's that, boy ?" demanded Mr. Craddock, pointing at the basket with his whip. "Treacle and candles, sir, for Lapwatter Hall." Mr. Gabriel Craddock stared hard for twelve seconds. Then he smote that boy's head and stalked on. In Leigh his reception was not of a piece. One or two pulled off their hats, others stared over fences. He stalked into the Smack, and the company, half-a-dozen fishermen, stopped talking suddenly and looked a little sheepish ; some rose and made obeisance, others sat stolidly in their places. Among the sitters was Big Sam, a burly, smuggling, hard-drinking ruffian, whom all Leigh went in fear of, who cared for nobody, and would rather fight the first man he saw than not. Big Sam resumed the conversation with offensive pointedness. "Gentleman ? aren't

no man, let alone gentleman!" To certain expressive coughs, nods and winks Sam paid no heed. "'Taren't no man as tells another to drink out o' t'horse pond. 'Tis a swine. An' so they calls it Lapwatter Hall. Ha! ha!" And Big Sam guffawed in Mr. Gabriel Craddock's face.

At the beginning of the speech that gentleman's ill-sorted eyes had turned ferociously on the group. Now with one stride and a surprising reach of arm he seized the great red ear which was on the nearer side of big Sam's shaggy head and banged that head mightily against the wall.

Big Sam was on his feet in an instant, and hurled himself at his assailant, but was met with a straight left, flush on the face, like the kick of a horse. Then, as he staggered and winked, the butt of Mr. Craddock's riding-whip beat across his skull till Big Sam lay heaped on the floor with broken head enough for three; and Mr. Craddock, leaving a minatory curse for the abashed company, strode through the door.

It was a brisk mile to the house for the brown mare, and Meg knew she carried an ill-tempered man. In the road before the gate stood a waggon, laden with many pots, pans, and crockery. Nan Tricker, emerging from the back premises with a frothsome mug of ale, met Mr. Craddock full in the way and began explanations without waiting for the angry question she foresaw.

"'Twere for Tim, sir, Tim Ladds o' Crispin's. Waggoner were carryin' the crocks an' pots to Black House as guessing 'twere the Leigh House meant, but Tim bringed him on here, sir, knowin' as 'twas Lapwater—" Nan Tricker checked the word too late.

"Go on, damme! Lapwater Hall! Lapwater Hall, ye'll call it, will ye, ye drabs?" and Mr. Craddock snatched the mug and flung it afar. "It sha'n't have the name for nothing, rot you, damn you all! For water you shall

drink, or nothing! Burn ye, I'll slit the gullet of the man, woman or child drinking aught but water in my place! I'll let the liquor out of 'em, damme! D'ye hear?" he added in a shout for general information, poor Nan having fled; "if a soul drinks my liquor, begad, I'll take it back with a carving knife!"

And Mr. Gabriel Craddock stuck to his programme. He kept the cellar-key in his own pocket. He wouldn't allow brewing on the premises, and all good drink was kept for his own regalement under lock and key. Tenderly he nursed the affront offered his house, and magnified it day by day. No innocent yokel could show himself about the place, on whatever errand, without drawing forth Mr. Craddock with "Eh! you want my beer, ye sodden hound, don't ye? And this here's Lapwater Hall, is it? Go and lap water then, ye son of a brach, lap water!" Whereat the unhappy intruder usually made off as quickly as he might.

Poor Mrs. Dudit was sadly fallen off in body from privation of mild ale. Often in the innermost privacy of the kitchen would she confide to Nan Tricker that it was what she hadn't been brought up to, and wouldn't abide. Nevertheless she stayed in the service, being in just such terror of Mr. Craddock as almost equally to fear staying and leaving. Amos Tricker, who was handy man about the house, fell into despondency of a depth which only a farm-hand with no beer can ever know. Insomuch that it seemed to his jaundiced and longing perceptions that the master purposely took his own drink as much as possible in full view of the sty or the stable, or wherever Amos might be at work, which he regarded as equally unkind to a "man's thirst an' feelins."

And all this time Mr. Gabriel Craddock made no friends, high or low. No man will make friends in South Essex who is inhospitable with his drink; so this man never had a friend

but his brown mare, who lapped water with contentment. Even now he was away from home as much as in it, but for such irregular times that no relief was afforded the household by his absence. Often he would lock himself in and sleep and drink all day. The various opinions of the neighbourhood settled down into a steady belief that he was the Devil.

And so for months till a winter's night when the ringed moon looked now and again through a rent in swarming clouds; when all Rochford Hundred, Foulness, and Canvey lay wetter and marshier than ever; when folk were mostly indoors and Lapwater Hall was barred, bolted, and shuttered. Mrs. Dudgit and Nan Tricker sat in the kitchen, the former sewing little bags to hold chips from the gibbet at Hadleigh Cross to cure ague, and the latter listening for a whistle which might tell of Tim Ladds going home down Lost Lane. Mrs. Dudgit was never a woman of extravagantly high spirits, and to-night she was more dismal than usual. A dog had been howling woefully in the yard since nightfall, and now a huge tallow winding-sheet had arisen by the flame of the candle, and death in the house was certain. The dog had been quiet for some few minutes, and the winding sheet, influenced by a fresh draught, was disappearing rapidly, when there smote on Nan's alert ear the sound of a horse's feet,—a lame horse's feet, it would seem, falling slowly and painfully almost all together. As it neared the stable yard, Nan said, "'Tis the master, and t'mare's lamed."

Scarce were the words uttered when with a great kick the yard-door flew open, and before the two women stood Mr. Gabriel Craddock, haggard and miry.

"G'law, sir!" said the women.

"Shut your mouth," he replied, hoarsely. "Tie this arm with a bit of that apron."

Then they saw that his right arm hung loose at his side, while blood

dripped from his fingers upon the floor. Mrs. Dudgit, terrified, scissored the sleeve away at his direction, and wrapped her torn apron tightly around a bad wound over the elbow joint. Mr. Craddock reached for a jug of water and emptied it at a draught.

"Any more lights?" pointing to the candle.

"No."

"Put it out,"—he did so himself. "Bolt and bar, and neither stir nor breathe, or by God I'll come and twist your necks. Say nothing, whoever comes." Then he went out.

Mrs. Dudgit and Nan Tricker sat in the dark trembling, not daring to speak. They could hear him going toward the fence by the road. In a few minutes he was heard approaching again, this time with a quiet and stealthy step, and the women clung together in a cold terror. Was he creeping back to murder them? No, the steps passed round to the back. But now there came the noise of many horses, pounding through the mire of the road, and nearing. Before the house they stopped, with shouts and trampling.

"House there, hulloo, hulloo!" They were coming from the road toward the door.

"Hulloo, there, hulloo!" And there was a thundering at the front door. The two women sat and quaked.

Then many voices said many things. "Come on, come on! Why stand here?" "Maybe they've seen him." "Get away ahead!" "Where?" "He's doubled." "Knock again, or go round. They'll lend us fresh horses." Then the thundering began again, and some came toward the stable-yard, shouting. Nan Tricker wept, biting hard on a thick fold of Mrs. Dudgit's gown to keep back a scream.

In the midst of the knocking arose a shout of "Here's the nag! He's close about!" And a shower of blows fell upon the door behind which

the women were. "Open, open! in the King's name! King's officers!" The door crashed in, and Nan Tricker and Mrs. Dudgit fell into a corner with a dismal howl. They were dragged out, limp and hysterical, among half-a-dozen men with steaming horses, as miry as Mr. Craddock, and wept and gasped unintelligibly at all questions.

Then the men took lights and searched high and low, in the house, the yard, and the outbuildings. For two of them were officers, and the man they sought was a powerfully built fellow of middle-height, who squinted, and who was Jerry Lynch the highwayman.

His operations on the great Essex Road and elsewhere had been so extensive and daring that he had long "weighed enough" in the matter of rewards to make it worth while to run a party for his capture. There was no other way of doing it. He worked alone and confided in nobody, never drank while "on the game," and in all things was the most businesslike and watchful high-tobymen unhung. He had been sighted near Shenfield, and had shot one man dead in his saddle before getting away across country with a bullet through his own arm. By Ingrave, Horndon, Laindon, and Pitsea they had followed him, and the brown mare must have been already well spent, or they could never have kept within hail of Jerry Lynch, who knew every dyke and fence. Down in the marshes, the hither side of Benfleet, he had bogged them cleverly and walked his nag slowly up the hill before their faces, back toward a further stretch of the road they had lately crossed, leaving them to come out as they got in; and so they followed the road and came to Lapwater Hall.

All that night lanterns flashed about Lapwater Hall and the land near it. In the grey of the morning Meg was seen shivering and whickering piteously by the pond, and in the

pond floated a hat. They took one of those great rakes which Essex people called a crome and dragged forth from under the culvert by the end the staring corpse of Mr. Gabriel Craddock.

Under the culvert he must have hidden himself, hanging on by the broken ragstone above him, until he fainted from the drain of blood from his arm and fell. As the day came and the news flew, the Leigh folk gathered about the pond and stared and whispered. Here was a judgment! The man was drowned in the water he would have driven thirsty men to when he owed them beer!

Staring so, they found another thing floating on the water and clinging near the edge. They fished it out and turned it over in amazement. It was a pair of horse's ears joined by a strap and fitted with a catch to hold to the head-stall. They were the false ears that Brown Meg wore when Mr. Gabriel Craddock was Jerry Lynch, the high-tobygloak!

Such was the end of Mr. Gabriel Craddock in the body. Now it was but a few months after this, when the hives were opened and the lambs fell, that Tim Ladds married Nan Tricker and there was rejoicing. Then Amos Tricker, having been for three days before bemused with much of the real knock-me-down native to the Smack Inn, conceived a notion of descending into the cellars of Lapwater Hall, which stood tenantless, and satisfying his doubts as to the quantity of liquor lying therein, and perchance the quality also. But when he came to the head of the cellar steps, it being a gloomy corner, there stood the ghost of Mr. Gabriel Craddock mug and spigot in hand, and squinted upon him, beckoning him down to drink of the old ale. For the chief of all the highwayman's sins, and that which held his soul to the earth, was his denial of good drink to his fellow man, and this the poor ghost did to purge it. But Amos would have none of the invitation, thirsty though he was, and ran with

all his might, never stopping till he fell among the wedding party, blue and speechless. And of the many thirsty men of Essex, good ale-fellows, who since have seen old Jerry (for so the ghost is called), none yet have accepted his offer of drink, wherefore he still walks Lapwater Hall, and can have no rest until he shall have redeemed, in some sort, his unpardonable fault. So that when a bandy-legged ghost on an earless mare

flies over Benfleet marshes, men turn aside and seek an ale-house; and when the same ghost, with mug and spigot, beckons the passer-by to drink at Lapwater Hall, he hurries on and seeks an ale-house too. For there certainly remains none of Mr. Craddock's liquor in those cellars, and ghostly ale is but thin drink. And this is the legend of Lapwater Hall.

ARTHUR MORRISON.

FRENCH GIRLS' SCHOOLS.

It may be taken for granted that not many people select the opening of January as a time for a journey to Paris, unless their visit has a particular purpose. When I stepped out of the train from Calais, on a bitterly cold morning early in the present year, and drove through the twilight streets where the grey dawn was still struggling with the dying gas-lamps, my own particular purpose was to avail myself of an opportunity for seeing something of the education of girls in Paris and its environs, both in Elementary and Secondary Schools, under the guidance of the friend who was awaiting me at the Grand Hôtel de la Sorbonne in the Quartier Latin, a hotel that I had never even heard of before, and which is frequented solely by people who are in some way or other connected with educational work. There is really little more than a fortnight in the whole year during which any one who is actively engaged in education can hope to see anything of the working of Continental schools. Terms and holidays are apt to coincide pretty closely everywhere, but as a rule the long summer vacation is longer than ours,—in France it occupies the whole of August and September—and this is compensated by shorter holidays at Christmas and at Easter, giving a certain margin of time in January and in the spring, during which English schools are still in vacation while French schools are already at work. It was of the January interval that I was about to take advantage, and in my friend Madame Armagnac I had the companionship of one who had herself been formerly connected with the French Education Department, and who is possessed of an unusually wide acquaintance with educational matters, not only in France and Eng-

land, but even in such out of the way parts of the world as Algeria and Corsica.

It was to her that I owed my introduction to M. Felix Martel, one of the eight Inspecteurs Générales, or Inspectors in Chief, of the French Education Department, and the author of several interesting books and pamphlets on primary and technical education in France. This gentleman was good enough to call upon me on the afternoon of my arrival, not only to bring me the necessary authorisation from the Minister of Public Instruction which was to open for me the doors of any schools that I might wish to visit, but also to take much kind trouble in sketching for me a programme, which was intended to enable me to make the very most of the short time that I had at my disposal. I am glad to take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude for the invaluable aid and counsel which was placed at my service with such ready friendliness. It seemed to me that the fact of my being the widow of a Senior Inspector in our own Education Department was regarded by him as a claim upon himself for special cordiality and courtesy. But, indeed, the name of Sandford was in itself a kind of letter of recommendation; for the long connection of my husband's distinguished cousin with the work of elementary education in England appeared to be perfectly well known to M. Martel, as well as to most of the educational people whom I met on the other side of the Channel.

Of a great educational progress in France since 1870 I had long been dimly aware, but even a passing glimpse of the remarkable work actually accomplished during the last twenty years is little less than start-

ling. "An absolute Renaissance" it has been called, and I do not think the epithet is an exaggerated one. Of all that has been done I have neither the time nor the ability to speak, nor can I pause at the present moment to make due allowance for such inevitable deficiencies and mistakes as of course must form some part of the volume of every great movement. I can only note down the three great lines of achievement which have made the most impression on my mind: (1) The extraordinary progress that has been made in Elementary Education. (2) The well-ordered Training Colleges (*Ecoles Normales*) for teachers of all grades. (3) That magnificent institution, the *Conseil Supérieur*, or great representative Council of Education. This last seems to me the finest thing that has been done for education, from the constitutional point of view, by any European people since the education movement first began.

Such have been some of the effects of a great national revival. When we come to ask the cause, there is only one possible answer. We find it in the impulse given to patriotic feeling by the awful experiences of that which is still spoken of, which, I suppose, ever will be spoken of, as "*l'année terrible*, that dreadful year." It is as if the entire spirit of the nation had been, as it were, retempered by its sudden and unexpected plunge into the bitter waters of adversity. Patriotism, longing to expend itself in service, fastened eagerly on the idea that defective education had played no inconsiderable part in the misfortunes of the country, and earnest men who had been rowing against a sluggish tide of popular indifference for years, now suddenly found that all France was with them, and that they could scarcely move fast enough for the national impatience towards the realisation of those long cherished ideals in which they had once found it so hard to awaken any adequate degree of interest.

To begin with Elementary Educa-

tion. France is now as decidedly ahead of ourselves, at any rate on several important points, as, I think it is not too much to say, she was distinctly in the rear before 1870.

I can but make my meaning clear by giving a description of my own impressions. To begin with then there is the *préau*. The first time I entered a French Primary School for girls, we were with M. Séhé, one of the *Sous-Inspecteurs de Gymnastique* for the Communal Schools of Paris, to whom M. Martel had kindly given me an introduction, and as he was taking me there to see school-drill, we went direct into the *préau*, an apartment so almost unheard of in English schools that we have not even a name for it. The word *pré* with the diminutive *au* means literally "a small field," and the *préau* is merely a spacious empty room, like an indoor field, in which the whole school can move freely about during recreation, but which is used and intended for a variety of other purposes besides play. As far as I could hear, no Elementary School in France is without one.

"What would you do without this *préau*?" I once said to the mistress of a large *École Maternelle* (Infant School). She looked at me as if I had said, What would you do without a roof, or without windows?—"Why, we *couldn't* do without it," she answered, in the tone of a person called upon for a truism.

The first *préau* that I saw was a low oblong apartment, occupying the basement of the school-building. There was a concrete floor, the ceiling was supported by iron pillars, and there was a bench fixed against the walls all round the room. Above this bench there were pegs for hats and cloaks, but this was not, I afterwards found, a universal arrangement, and of course it rather spoilt the appearance of the room. There was no other furniture, except a few light tables and chairs, and some gymnastic apparatus at the far end. And here I may observe that the architecture of French schools is, as

a rule, neither picturesque nor ornamental. The school is always a solid many-windowed block, about three stories high, either oblong, or built round a court-yard like so many French hotels. Externally it is as plain as a factory, not an unnecessary *franc* has been spent on decoration; but within, no reasonable outlay has been spared to make the building perfectly fit for its purpose. And this liberality seems to me to be simply right. Compulsory education imposes responsibilities. If the State insists on taking charge of children for so many hours a day, the State is bound to take care both that the children's time shall be well and profitably employed, and that no unnecessary injury be done to their health by defective educational arrangements. For instance, if large masses of children are to be restrained from movement and kept poring over books and slates in rooms where the atmosphere has not been thoroughly renewed for hours together, the conditions can hardly be regarded as favourable to growth and vigour. If any one is unable to imagine what I mean, I would ask him to enter any class-room in any Elementary School in England somewhere about eleven o'clock in the morning, and he will know. In the French school the child's natural need of movement and change of air is recognised and supplied. Every class has and ought to have its own class-room, well lighted and well ventilated, where the pupils sit at desks and do their lessons; but for gymnastic exercises, for drill, for recreation, for singing, there is always the *préau*, and the very existence of such an apartment gives an elasticity to the programme which must materially tend to make school-life happier, and therefore far more healthy.

Several doors open into the *préau*, of which one communicates with the *cantine*, an institution which we only possess in the modified form of charitable efforts to give meals to the children in our poorest schools during the winter months. In France, every

Elementary School has its *cantine*, organised by the Municipality, which provides a hot meal for all those pupils who do not return to their homes for *déjeuner* at half-past eleven.¹ The children pay for their mid-day meal by means of counters, which are bought by their parents at so much a dozen; but in cases of poverty, either chronic or occasional, these tickets can be obtained without payment, though, when the children give them in, they do so just as the others do, and none of their companions know whether it is by the care of the State or of their own parents that these little ones are fed. Before we exclaim at the cost to the tax-payer, we must remember that the French have no Poor-Law like ours, and that this is simply one of their methods for distributing relief, and probably less costly than our own.

It is something to be able to feel that there hardly can be such a thing as an absolutely starving child in Paris within the limits of school-age, and this, not in winter only, but all the year round. One meal a day, at least, the State insists upon, and it seemed to me that this vigilance over the health of the young, this determination to take off for them the sharpest edge of extreme privation without marking them with the brand of pauperism, must in time have visible effects on the physical well-being of the entire population. What an untold relief to many mothers it must be to know that, on school-days at any rate, their children are at least sure of one good meal a day. It is eaten on temporary tables formed with boards and trestles, which are brought into the *préau* from the *cantine*.

There was a lady already in the *préau* when we entered, whom M. Séhé introduced as an Inspector of Physical Exercises in Girls' Schools, under the French Education Department.

¹ It may be observed that French school-hours are longer than ours, and indeed, in my opinion, far too long. They are from half-past eight to half-past eleven in the morning, and then from one to five in the afternoon.

Here, too, was another novelty. In France the appointment of Lady Inspectors, both for Girls' Schools and for Infant Schools, is a regular part of the official organisation. And now you must imagine a long procession of little girls, small baby creatures from the Infant Department, who enter the *préau* by another door, and go through simple exercises and pretty marching, winding in and out of the iron pillars and singing nearly all the time. And then these little ones ran away, and from yet another door issued a less numerous troop of elder girls, for this school was situated in a fairly well-to-do district, where parents do not take their children away at the earliest possible moment, but let them stay on at school till thirteen or even fourteen. Very neat they all looked, each girl wearing the *tablier scolaire*, or school-apron, which is so universal in France that it is almost a sort of uniform worn by schoolgirls of every age and class. It is always made of some black woollen stuff, and is a sort of blouse, with full loose sleeves buttoned at the wrists, which entirely covers the dress and fastens behind. Pretty it certainly is not, but it is eminently suitable, and I think it contributes to produce a general effect of smartness and good order, which certainly makes a pleasing impression. These elder girls also sang, as they marched into position, but not, of course, when doing "parallel bars," which was evidently a favourite exercise and particularly well done. The movement never ceased, about forty girls going through the bars in sets, and, though without music, keeping time. They were, as I have already said, in their ordinary dress, no exercises requiring a special costume being attempted.

Another day we visited two other Primary Schools for girls; the first in the well-to-do regions beyond the Champs Elysées, attended chiefly by the daughters of gardeners, coachmen, artisans, small tradespeople, all

the little world that lives by supplying the domestic needs of a wealthy neighbourhood; the other in the Rue Lacordaire, one of the very poorest quarters in Paris.

The first was really an excellent school, though in a modest building, and with the smallest *préau* that I saw anywhere; but then all the pupils, or almost all, went home to their *déjeuner*, and as the Directress said to me, they needed a *préau* less than many. I think it was here that I saw reading and writing taught simultaneously, from a First Reading-Book published in the written character, so that the printed alphabet need not be attempted until the scholar has at any rate got beyond the Primer. The teachers said that children taught in this manner learn to read more rapidly than those who are set to acquire two alphabets at once, according to the usual plan. Here, too, I remember, I was present at a very good lesson on history, a lesson which was quite elementary, and which, nevertheless, had in it both life and interest. The method employed seemed to be (a) To give a lesson, prepared by the teacher, upon a certain chapter in a little school-history, which is then set for preparation against the next time. (b) The result is tested in the second lesson by prepared questions,—not questions set hap-hazard out of a book, which is consulted from moment to moment. It was this second lesson which was in progress when we entered the classroom, and I was really much edified by the readiness with which questions on the reigns of Charles VIII. and Louis XII. were answered. It is true that the questions were very easy, and that only broad outlines and principal events and characters were attempted; but this seemed to me precisely the kind of instruction that was suitable to the occasion.

History in France does not appear to be subordinated either to science or to language. Great stress is laid, even in Primary Schools, upon the duty of making the young acquainted with

the history of their own country. Some slight sketch of universal history is given as a background, but the history and geography of France form the essential object. There is perhaps room for reflection whether the absence of background, which a mistaken theory of thoroughness has produced in many English schools, does not result in what may be called a want of historical perspective, without which the facts of history can never be retained and harmonised as parts of an organic whole, but lie heaped in the memory in loose and disconnected layers very difficult to produce when wanted, very apt to get into confusion, and sometimes even felt to be burdensome to the mind. History in our own Elementary Schools is an "extra subject," and by no means the one that is universally chosen. It is not supposed to "pay" as well as geography, and there is an idea that it offers more opportunity than many other subjects for those disconcerting questions whereby the examiner (and there are such examiners) whose particular knack it is to convict children of ignorance rather than to find out what they actually have been taught, may easily disappoint the labours of a whole year. In France some elementary knowledge of history is included even in that *brevet d'études primaires* which must be obtained before any child is free for employment, a *brevet* of so very elementary a character that many children do obtain it before they are twelve years old.¹

We had some difficulty in finding our way to the Rue Lacordaire, which was in such a remote part of Paris that the very cab-drivers scarcely seemed to know where it was, and even the one to whom we eventually entrusted ourselves politely suggested that we must be making a mistake, that we could not want to go *there*.

¹ It is a question whether the possibility of passing the required examination at so very early an age, must not detract from the value of the certificate.

At last, however, we found ourselves at the entrance of a school-building which, for once, seemed imposing by its very size, in contrast with its surroundings. It was intended for twelve hundred children, boys, girls, and infants, and inquiring for the Girls' Department, we were conducted up stairs to the room of Madame la Directrice,—for another novelty in these French Elementary Schools for girls, is that the Directress always has her private room or office, in which she keeps the school-papers, attends to school-business, and receives parents and other visitors.

One morning in the week, we were told, was regularly devoted to receiving parents, and there is, I believe, in connection with every Elementary School in Paris a Comité Scolaire, or voluntary committee, which co-operates with the head-teachers in visiting parents, in looking up cases of sickness or distress, admonishing cases of neglect, and investigating cases of complaint.

The Directress at the Rue Lacordaire gave a sad account of the terrible poverty that surrounded her; but so neat and self-respecting was the outward appearance of her pupils that they compared quite favourably with the school we had just left. Indeed, the standard of instruction seemed to be just as good, except that here I saw no pupils above the age of twelve. I was delighted with the cordial relations that evidently existed between the various members of the staff, and delighted, too, with the kind and sympathetic reception we ourselves met with. Indeed, in some respects, and taking into consideration the character of the surroundings, this school in the Rue Lacordaire seemed to me one of the best Elementary Schools I have ever seen anywhere.

I was especially struck with the specimens of needlework that were shown to me, some of which I was permitted to carry off. The cleanliness and finish would have been admirable in any school, and in the samplers,

which the pupils are allowed to make during one term in each year, there was a display of taste and a delicacy of manipulation which impressed me much. The school course in needle-work concludes with learning to cut out and to put together a simple dress-bodice, fitting it on to a miniature bust provided for the purpose. I also carried off a specimen of a copy-book, with the neat portfolio in which the *cahier unique*, or single copy-book, used in most French Elementary Schools is kept. The one book serves for every exercise that is done in writing, a plan which would not answer where the subjects are more numerous, but which is very well suited to Primary work. A more interesting book is the *cahier mensuel*, or monthly copy-book, which is intended to be a record of the pupil's progress throughout her school-life. Once a month the exercise for the day, sums, copy, dictation, history, or whatever it may be, is done in the *cahier mensuel*. The page is then signed and dated, and the book put away for another month. Every one will understand the value of such a record as a register of progress.¹ As an illustration of the manner in which it is intended to be used, I will give a short extract from the "Recommendations addressed to the pupil," which are printed inside the cover.

Child, this book is delivered to you to be the companion and the witness of your work during the whole time that you are to pass at school. . . . See to it that hereafter you may be able to look over this abridgment of your school-life without a blush. To do this you need not be one of the foremost pupils; the precise advantage of this copy-book is that its aim is not to make a comparison between you and your school-fellows, but to compare you with your successive self. The question is not whether you are more intelligent, cleverer, better informed than this or that pupil, but whether each year, each month, you have improved upon yourself. . . . Child, think besides of this; we do not

work for ourselves alone in this world, we work for others also. Even children, without thinking of it, work for their country. For good scholars grow up into good citizens. If you employ your young years wisely, if you put to serious use all the means of instruction that the Republic takes care to offer to all her children, you may one day give back to your country that which your country is now doing for you. France needs industrious and good people; you may be one of these if you begin to prepare for it now. Do not waste your time, for you have no right to do so. The idle scholar does a wrong to himself no doubt, but above all he does a wrong to his country. If you are passing through some moment of weakness or discouragement, do not allow yourself to be cast down. Say, rather, silently in your own heart: No, I will not be one of the useless ones of the earth, ungrateful to my family, ungrateful to France. *I will work, I will improve, and that not only because it is my interest, but because it is my duty.*

This is also an instance of that constant appeal to patriotic motives which seems to pervade French education. I believe such motives do actually count for a great deal in producing the high average of regular attendance which is so noticeable in the Elementary Schools of France, though no doubt Mr. Fitch is right in pointing out the marked effect in this direction of the *livret*, or fortnightly report to the parents, and the *brevet d'études primaires*, or leaving-certificate.

The regular keeping of the *cahier mensuel* is, of course, a pretty severe test, and I was not surprised to learn that there are teachers who regard it with disfavour. The Directress of the Rue Lacordaire was not one of these. She willingly allowed me to look through the monthly copy-books of an entire class, but, indeed, the way in which they were kept would have been a credit to any school. And this was in a district so poor, that it can only be compared to those unhappy quarters in our own towns, where whole generations of charitable effort seem, as it were, to be swallowed up in a sea of poverty and to leave no trace, except in momentary relief to indi-

¹ An exercise-book of a similar character, for use in English schools, is being published by Allman and Son.

viduals. Paris is not so large as London, and the outward signs of squalor and misery seemed less apparent; but the Directress said to me that, if I had time, she could have taken me to scenes within a few minutes' walk that would have made my heart ache. It was a comfort to remember that there was a *cantine*, so that, if many of the children that I saw before me had come to school hungry, they would at any rate not go home unfed.

But more than that, I could not help feeling that the very existence of such well-built and well-provided school-buildings must have a civilising and uplifting influence. Nothing seemed neglected that could make both the pupils and teachers take a pleasure and a pride in their school; and to the very poor how few things there are in which they can take either pride or pleasure. Everything was in perfect repair and scrupulously clean; none of the proper school-appliances were wanting. I even observed that here, as in the other Primary Schools visited by me, there was in one of the class-rooms a bookcase containing a small educational library of all such books as the teaching-staff were at all likely to want to consult.

The next day M. Martel was good enough to conduct us himself to the École Sophie Germain, the only École Primaire Supérieure, or Higher-Grade School for Girls, in Paris. In France the two grades of Elementary instruction are distinctly recognised and provided for. There are, first, the children of parents who cannot as a rule afford to prolong the period of school-education beyond the age of thirteen, and who very often withdraw both boys and girls in order that they may begin to earn their own living at the moment they can legally do so. There are, secondly, the children of parents who can afford to keep their children at school, and are ready to make sacrifices to do so, up to the age of fifteen or even sixteen. For these the Higher Grade School is intended, offering a three years course which begins

after the certificate of Primary Studies has been obtained.

The École Sophie Germain,—like the Lycées the Higher Grade School has a special name of its own—was installed in quarters as spacious and suitable as any London High School, though externally there was nothing at all remarkable about them, except that the Directress's private room was larger and handsomer than we had seen before. It contained what, at first, looked to me like a great many book-shelves, but I soon observed that upon these shelves were ranged, not books, but a monotonous array of brown-backed portfolios each representing a record of some pupil's work, specimens, papers, &c. The Directress received us with great kindness and cordiality and was anxious to let us see and hear as much as possible, but expressed much regret that we could not hear any lessons given for it was a "day of interrogatories." "We do something of the kind about once a month," she explained. But to be present at these interrogatories was in itself something new, and we were soon seated in a class-room where a simple *vivâ voce* examination on physiology was going on, physiology, be it observed, of the simplest and most practical kind. One of the pupils was called up to the blackboard and very readily drew a simple diagram with red and blue chalk showing the circulation of the blood. It was clear that the child quite understood what she was about; she even succeeded in bringing out a clear answer to a question intended to elicit the connection between fresh air and a healthful circulation; and then she completely lost her head, she coloured, the tears came into her eyes, she made random shots; and a second pupil whom the teacher called up was equally confused, though she too showed knowledge. "And they are two of my best," murmured the teacher in a voice of disappointment. "But it is very easy to see that they are frightened," I could not help saying,—and frightened they certainly were. I believe it was the

presence of that awful personage the Inspecteur Générale, or else it was his presence and that of the foreign lady combined. He seemed one of the kindest of men, and I do not think he was their own particular Inspector; but certainly both children and teachers were nervous on that occasion, though as a rule I used to wonder at the presence of mind with which quite long replies would be given. For instance, I have seen a child work a sum on the blackboard, explaining every step of the process as she went on without the slightest embarrassment.

Nor was there any embarrassment in the next class that we entered, where an interrogatory on geography was in progress. The method was so new to me that I think I must describe it, just adding that the Directress expressed great regret that we could not hear a geography lesson given, because the lady who taught that subject was a specially able person. Well, she had a note-book containing sketches of the lessons given during the last term, and from these she had written headings on a number of slips of paper. Each pupil drew one of these slips by lot and had to be ready to treat the subject marked upon it. Thus one pupil had drawn "the Rhine," and was required to sketch the course of the Rhine on the blackboard, marking the principal tributaries, and naming the most important towns. Another had "the Vineyards of France," and upon a blank map that hung against the wall, she rapidly pointed out the vine-growing districts. A third had "Lace and paper," which was treated in the same way. The *carte muette* is in constant use in French schools, and I think there was always a blank map of France, and another of the world, in every class-room that I entered. The outlines are indicated by the use of different shades of black and grey, and the staring white outlines which make no difference between land and sea are avoided.

At the top of the building was a

very large studio lighted from the roof, in which a drawing-lesson was going forward. In another part of the same room I noticed several rows of light oblong tables. These I was told were for lessons in cutting out, as the elements of plain dressmaking form part of the school-course. Just as we were taking our leave I noticed quite a company of little girls rubbing away at a glazed partition, which, I was told, belonged to the *préau*. "Oh no!" was the reply to my inquiries, "We don't depend upon the pupils for the care of the building. What you see is a lesson in domestic economy; they are learning to clean windows."

Pupils come from far and near to the École Sophie Germain. It is an excellent school, and full to overflowing, and I have no doubt that ere long Paris will possess other schools of the same kind, but never very many, never so many as if the Écoles Professionnelles, or Technical Schools for Girls, had not been devised. Of these there are now six in Paris, and the one that I visited contained two hundred and fifty pupils. There will always be a large number of parents who desire for their girls exactly what the École Primaire Supérieure offers, —a better general education than can possibly be attained by those who have to leave school at thirteen; but there is a far larger class for whom better professional training in technical work is an all-important advantage. Indeed, there is nothing to prevent Higher Grade pupils from going on to an École Professionnelle, and they often do, though generally speaking the pupils of the École Professionnelle come straight from the Primary Schools; it is however, a condition of admission that pupils must either bring with them their *brevet d'études primaires* or must pass an entrance examination of equivalent difficulty.

The full title of the School is L'École Professionnelle Ménagère, and a certain course of fundamental training in the elements of domestic usefulness is required from all. Afterwards the pupils specialise, each

devoting herself entirely to some chosen profession, either laundry-work, dressmaking, embroidery, millinery, or cookery. Skill in embroidery is a special aptitude in many French women, and the cultivation and improvement of national or local gifts for any particular kind of work is a distinct aim of the training given in the *Écoles Professionnelles*.

The first thing I noticed in the waiting-room into which we were shown was a very elegant black cashmere dress, beautifully embroidered in black silk and beads. The pattern had been designed, and the work executed, in the school. And of course this dress was an "order," for the *École Professionnelle* executes many orders, but only for ladies who do not mind waiting two or three months for a dress and will allow the ceremony of "trying on" to be treated as a lesson either given or received. The elements of the art are, however, taught on busts mounted on stands.

I do not know if we were fortunate or unlucky in chancing upon a day when neither dressmaking nor embroidery was in actual progress, because almost all the pupils were engaged in a drawing-lesson, but it was a drawing-lesson of a kind that I never saw before, where everything that was being done had a strictly practical application. The embroiderers were either designing patterns, or learning to paint flowers and butterflies with a special view to the requirements of their art. On one table lay a case of butterflies from which the students selected for themselves. A much larger number of the pupils were engaged in drawing and painting costumes and millinery from models specially composed by some of the elder pupils. There were at least a dozen miniature busts mounted on stands about two feet high, each of which supported a fashionable costume designed and made up in the right materials, and in the most exact and complete manner. On other stands were knots of ribbon, bonnets, and other specimens

of millinery. The beginners made their drawings in pencil, but as they improved they were promoted to the use of colour.

In the spacious kitchen to which we were afterwards conducted, a substantial mid-day meal was being prepared consisting of a good plain soup, roast meat, and haricot beans. For this each pupil pays twenty-five *centimes*, except that there are certain holders of scholarships who pay nothing at all. In a smaller kitchen, or class-room, a little group of eight pupils were receiving a lesson in more advanced cookery, and at the moment of our visit were in the act of learning to make a *mayonnaise*. These pupils learn not only the art of cooking, but the business of marketing. A certain sum is allotted for the week's work, and they themselves buy all the materials they need, and are taught how to lay out the money to the best advantage.

I believe the school we visited was the first of the *Écoles Professionnelles* started in Paris. The Directress told us how it originated in two rooms, attached to one of the Elementary Schools as a sort of technical department, and how the work prospered and developed itself, and was becoming every day more valued and more appreciated. But no pupil is received who has not already acquired something like a solid foundation of Elementary knowledge; technical instruction is to supplement, not to supplant the general training of the intelligence in the Primary or Higher Grade Schools. In the Higher Grade Schools, indeed, a little technical training is actually given, but until the certificate of Primary studies has been attained, nothing of the kind is attempted, beyond elementary instruction in needlework.

This sketch, brief as it is, would be incomplete without a few words upon that most important of all subjects, religious instruction, which the unhappy operation of religious and political jealousies excludes from the school-programme,—not, alas, in France only!

"It was desired," writes M. Martel, "that the schools imposed upon children of all religions should, in the religious point of view, be neuter, and, without, however, excluding from the programme of instruction in morality, the study of our duty towards God, it was decided that the religious instruction should in future be given by the minister of each form of worship outside the school-buildings. To this intent the law of March the 28th, 1882, has decreed that all public Elementary Schools are to be closed one day in every week besides Sunday." (*Législation et Réglementation de l'Enseignement Primaire*, 1878-88.)

The Saturday holiday, or half-holiday, seems to be a thing unknown in France, but in accordance with the above regulation every Thursday is regularly set apart as the day of religious instruction, with the intention of affording full opportunity for sending the children to be catechised in the various churches, and the fact that I heard this day commonly spoken of as the *jour du catéchisme* seemed to show that instruction of this kind is actually given, and regularly attended. I regret that it did not come in my way to be present, so that I can give no report of the method and character of the teaching. I suppose only a practical teacher can be fully aware of the almost complete uselessness of catechetical instruction that is given to large and miscellaneous masses of children; while, if the teaching is to be solely in the hands of the clergy, it is difficult to see how this evil can be avoided and the pupils separated into groups according to age and intelligence. There are other criticisms that suggest themselves to my mind, but I prefer to dwell upon the consideration whether, things being as they are in France, any better system can be shown to be possible just now. The duty of providing for religious instruction is certainly recognised, and this is a point of far higher importance than the adequacy or inadequacy of the present plan. In my own

opinion it is a very inadequate arrangement, but I do see in it one advantage which may, perhaps, have far-reaching consequences. It does throw back upon the parents that main and chief responsibility for their children's religious training which unquestionably belongs to them. It is much more upon the home than upon the school that the question really depends whether boys and girls are to be brought up to act upon religious principles and duly grounded in the elements of Christian faith and duty; and anything that tends to make parents feel this more deeply may lead to much good.

The chief point, indeed, in which the French system of Elementary Education struck me as distinctly superior to our own, is that it is so much better in touch with the parents. There is a constant endeavour to keep them acquainted with the conduct and progress of their children. It is taken for granted that their interest and co-operation may be relied upon; the laws relating to compulsory attendance are carefully explained to them; the manner in which these laws are carried out appears to be far less vexatious than it is with us; the school-course is not so rigidly tabulated, and the items are not calculated at a monetary value, but every parent can clearly understand the connection between regular attendance and the *brevet d'études primaires* which it is so important that his child should obtain; if there is anything he does not understand it is easy to ask for an explanation, for every head-master or head-mistress has a regularly appointed time for receiving visits from parents.

And here, for the present, I must break off, only begging my readers to remember that this sketch has no pretensions to any higher authority than that of a simple record of the impressions of a very short, though very interesting, educational journey.

M. E. SANDFORD.

A LIGHT O' CARGLEN.

I HAVE elsewhere told that in our parish of Carglen, big though it was, we could not boast of a single village worthy of the name. We had, however, a few scattered hamlets. One of these clusters of thatched houses, all plain and venerable, was found at a cosy spot in a grassy hollow where the two main roads crossed each other, the first and widest being always spoken of as the toll-road ; the second, rougher and less frequented, as the road of Baldearie. A little window in the gable of the country post-office looked out upon the former, and a big front window on the latter. The office itself was the glory and honour of the hamlet, which bore a name that can neither be called pretty nor appropriate. It was known to natives as Rottenslough, and to others as Rottenslough in Carglen. Its inhabitants were few, and they may be described in one or two brief sentences. First came the joint masters of the post-office, John and Eppie Eunie, who, in addition to looking after our letters, supplied coffins for the bodies of old parishioners who had passed away,—by gracious providence every one seemed to live to a ripe age. Then Saunders Grant, the shepherd, had his dwelling here, though he kept sheep on the hills of Drumean. Johnny Mathieson, with a small family, had gravitated to Rottenslough when “the cauld soil o’ Pittiewake fairm” had taken health from his body, and most of the money from his purse. Maggie Lyon, whose red hair was never kempt and who lived God knows how, was the terror of the few neighbours ; and, lastly, old Elsie Morris and her daft son Jock dwelt alone in the prettiest little house in the hamlet. These were the folks, and none of them attained to the first rank of fame among us. But there

was an adjunct to the hamlet about one hundred yards off, and a great man ruled in it. Rising from the corner of John Eunie’s big fruit-garden, round which a row of tall poplar trees stood solemn sentinel, a narrow footpath left the toll-road and wound upwards through broom and fern, till on the top of the brae it straggled into the railway-station of Carglen. The approach for horses and carriages was by a different road and a different angle, needless here to describe. When the little footpath had thrown you, as it were, on to the platform, you saw houses indeed and a strip of rail, but, save and except the clamour of an occasional slow-crawling train, there was neither sound nor sign of life. Yet somewhere in the recesses of the place three stalwart men might have been found ; two of them slow of body and slower of mind, but a third as nimble in body as he was keen in intellect. This was the Station-Master, one of the lights o’ Carglen.

In the station everything was plain and simple. There was no beauty, unless we may call the sloping bank in front of the Master’s house beautiful, for it was covered with the greenest grass, and sweet flowering shrubs shed a fragrance which filled the little rooms with a constant perfume. Nothing startling, scarcely anything dramatic, appeared ; but yet from time to time a rich store of interest was found for those who had eyes to see and ears to hear. First of all there was the Master, Peter Wilkins Grant. He always signed his name in full, and had more than once spoken of himself as “I, Peter Wilkins Grant,” rolling out the words as if there were something magical in them. But all Carglen knew him simply as “P. W.”: “Gude e’en,

P. W. ;" "Gie's a return, P. W. ;" "Are the nowt in, P. W. ?" "Gie't tae the Gohvermint, P. W.," were some of the many expressions that rang about our ears as we sat, by parish right (no privilege dreamed of there !), in the little booking-office. It is meet and fitting that we should see P. W. in his little domain, and hear him discourse, but first it may be well to tell something of the man.

P. W., then, was a pillar of the Free Kirk. Sunday after Sunday his small lean face arose from the depths of an enormous pew in the middle of the plain rough building, and a pair of big black eyes were set steadily on the figure of the Reverend Merrison Dean as he thundered the terrors of the Law and all the Prophets from a tiny pulpit that hung like a cage from the roof. This pulpit, by the way, tickled the fancy of a budding artist from the town of Eilfin, and he produced a wonderful piece of work, wherein the pulpit was turned to a cradle, and the grim black preacher to a fearsome child with a terrible head looking out upon the audience. But, to tell the truth, the pious man in the energy of his eloquent soul played sad pranks in that little cage, and short of an actual somersault there were few attitudes in which he might not have been seen. But P. W. had an eye for every gesture, an ear for every word, and (worst of all!) a black, greasy note-book in which terrible entries were made against the Free Kirk pastor. Picture the terrors of the man's soul as he looked into those fierce sharp eyes just as he reached the penultimate clause of a polished sentence, and saw the pencil at work in that tell-tale book. It was a stern ordeal, but the Minister bore it well ; and I have seen him stop in the middle of a little argument, take three pinches of snuff between finger and thumb from his waistcoat-pocket, and, in the spirit of chivalry, allow time to the recording angel to make a point against him. When the service was over, P. W. would run home (he was

always a man in a hurry), and then set to work upon the damning note-book. Ay, you might see him at it far into the Sunday afternoon if you chanced to pass over the bridge and look down into his window. It was labour for God, and he stood to it far more lustily than he did on week-days to his earthly work for the company that he served. What was the object of all this careful toil ? Ah ! Maister Merrison Dean could have told. The object of it all was the good of the Minister's soul, and his guidance in the right pastoral path. P. W. knew what he was about, and, so sure as the warm sun shone in the sweet summer sky, if our parish had been sufficiently civilized to call for its own local paper, a powerful letter would have appeared weekly in it, dealing with ministerial failings in a certain place "not a hundred miles frae hereawa." But we had no newspaper save the *Blankshire*, and P. W. was afraid to approach its sublime majesty. Yet the great resource of letter-writing remained. Here was a way still open for P. W. to serve God ; and he buckled to it with a right good heart. Week after week Robbie, the "post," handed in at the door of the grey manse by Whiteydell burn epistles recording in plain black and white the word of the Lord by the mouth of P. W. against the lukewarm Merrison Dean. P. W. not only held the mirror up to nature with wonderful fidelity, but he added vivid touches of his own. Sometimes he would sign himself "A True Friend" ; at others "Listener" ; at others "A Voice" ; sometimes "A Sorrowing Brother" ; and on rare occasions he would write in his own name, "Peter Wilkins Grant." The poor Minister was held in a cleft stick. The more P. W. wrote, the more he subscribed to the funds of the Kirk, and the parson dared not openly quarrel with a man who denied himself butter with his bread for the good of the earthly Zion. But even the patience of the Reverend Merrison Dean (it was a long and sore-tried patience) at length became exhausted,

and one gloomy Sunday, after P. W. had indited an epistle containing words far different from those of which the Psalm speaks as "good matter in a song,"—words, in sober truth, gravely calling in question the soundness in the faith of no less a man than Smith Amos Gibb,—words even daring to reflect upon that good man's way of life,—the Minister mounted the pulpit, read a few of those terrible verses in which the Psalmist invokes curses upon the heads of his enemies; prayed sadly (without taking snuff even once) for self-deluded Pharisees and whited sepulchres; and, when the time for the sermon came, he seemed to stand up in the exalted pulpit-cage at least six inches taller than usual, as he gave out the text from John xxi. 22: "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." I shall never forget the strange look that came over the face of P. W. after he had carefully compared this passage in the fourth Gospel with its context. It was the one and only time within my knowledge in which P. W. lost his wits. The recording pencil fell from his hands, and rolled from under the pew down the passage towards the pulpit, and I would swear that a faint smile curled about the preacher's grim lips as he saw it, calling out for the fourth time, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." Mr. Merrison Dean fairly excelled himself on that inspired Sunday. He smote the Bible almost into tatters; he spread out his arms and leaped upon the desk like a man bent on swimming over our heads; then he shot back featureless and lifeless as Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt; but ever and again he sank forward, and wound up his impassioned paragraphs with the pointed refrain, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me!" Every Carglener in the Free Kirk knew what it all meant, and there were few folks asleep. P. W.'s face was as white as the driven snow, for he felt that three-score eyes were upon him all gleaming with pleasure at the Minister's triumph. P. W. was silenced

for four long weeks, but he passed the time in praying for the Minister's spiritual condition, alternated with terrible harangues to the men who served under him at the little station on the unpardonable sin of those who "Kent the truth but didna walk in it."

P. W. had an eye to most folks in the parish, but after the Minister, there was one person whom he persecuted with relentless attention. This was the wife of Mungo Stennis, tenant of the farm Links o' Dornie. Mrs. Stennis had a tongue, and she wagged it freely. The little woman was not above criticism, and there was a rumour in the parish that copious doses of brandy increased the acidity of her temper and disposition. Now any one in Carglen who had recourse to the brandy-bottle, be it man or woman, had immediate sentence passed upon him. Whisky was a homely, harmless liquor, but we all said with honest poet Burns:

Wae worth that brandy, burning trash,
Fell source o' mony a pain an' brash!

And P. W. led the attack in his wonted manner. Letters began to arrive at the Links time after time; at first from "A Parishioner," setting forth the heinous sin of brandy-drinking and backbiting. Then "A Sorrowing Brother" drew pictures of a drunkard's sad condition in terms as pathetic, if not so polished, as the confessions of the immortal Elia. No effect being produced, "A Disgusted Fellow-worshipper" poured forth the vials of his wrath, like a modern Hosea, against the sinful drinker. But still the brandy-bibber kept quiet. P. W. was not to be beaten, however, and he adopted the vein satirical. That is to say, he went to the town of Kail, purchased a small keg of brandy, and ostentatiously sent it with "the Christian compliments of Peter Wilkins Grant to Mrs. Mungo Stennis." Then he went into his room and prayed that the arrow might reach her heart. But Mrs. Stennis was equal to the occasion, and she wrote a

letter to P. W. thanking him heartily for his present. "I had often heard of your skill as a judge of good brandy. It is a gift that comes of long experience and some taste, and I am indebted to you," said she in her grand way. P. W. a brandy-drinker! This was too much. "Lord rebuke the enemy," cried he, and hurried off to the lawyer in Kail. He was "Real slanderit, he was, and he wud hae the law o' her, the dirty drunken woman he had tried to save; ay, it wud be a Coort o' Sessions job, that wud it—" but the lawyer altered his mind. So P. W. neither prayed nor wrote any more, but spoke of some who were "Far, far gone,—dry sticks,—mere brands for the burnin'."

P. W. was an "aawthor," a man who had written a book, or, at any rate, a small pamphlet in "prentit letters," and after that event you may be sure his praises were in every mouth in Carglen. No one had done such a thing within the memory of the oldest inhabitant, not even a former Minister's son, he who had made "siccan a name up in Lunnon as a newspaper chiel," and had been described by no less a man than Francie Kemp as "A real carl o' geniwis, but whether limb o' Sahtan or freak o' nature, God kens." P. W. was a man with a theory, and notwithstanding the vogue that he obtained, had, like most men weighted with theories, an uphill battle to fight. His book was entitled *Newspapers against Rugs; an Argument and a Plea*. We read it at first with awe and admiration, the more readily as P. W. treated us all to free copies. But the glamour passed away, and we were free to criticise. Then a veritable spate broke over the head of Peter Wilkins Grant, Author and Station-Master. P. W.'s book, with its argument and plea, was intended to prove to all the world that thick travelling-rugs or even greatcoats were mere useless burdens to any traveller, when he could wrap his legs, his body, and his head-piece in the *Blankshire Journal*, the *Elfin*

Chronicle, or the *Aberdeen Twopenny*. P. W. firmly believed in the reign of Saints on the earth, and the immediate dawn of the Millennium, and he would say to a careless mortal, "Why think o' the body, man, when the soul is cauld and the Lord may this day be in the air?" But if one chanced in the dead of winter to appear in the station with a cosy rug, he would bounce forth and argue with fierce emphasis against the sin of those who despised the voice of wisdom, and trusted their bodies to woollen wraps instead of folds of newspaper. One day he tackled the Laird. Mr. Malcolm Seth was going to Edinburgh, and he carried a big rug. P. W. rushed out, thrust under the Laird's nose a copy of his book, and held in readiness a packet of newspapers. The Laird took the book, glanced at it, and P. W. stood prepared to argue the question. Mr. Seth looked at him pitifully through his glittering spectacles for a few seconds, and then muttering "*Cui bono?*" in his thin rasping voice, turned his back and walked away. P. W. spent the afternoon in interceding for the Laird. But it was Pete McQueban and the Elder of Gelnabreich who fairly demolished the writer's theory; so far at least as our parish was concerned. It was the morning of the market-day, and the little office was full. P. W., with his left foot on the edge of a chair and his right hand resting on the big station-bell, held forth upon the merits of the theory.

Then said Pete, "P. W., were ye iver fu'?"

"Fu'!" bawled the Station-Master; "what does the man take me for?"

"Weel, dae ye drink?" added Pete mildly.

"He's a cauld-water man," said one.

"Aweel," continued Pete, "if that be sae, hoo can the chiel tell ye what's warm an' what's nae. John Barley-corn against it a', say I. Try it, P. W.," he added, "an' then we can hae your opinion."

Hereat everybody laughed, but P. W. looked serious.

"Haith and there's truth in that, Pete," said Gelnies the Elder, who, though a sober douce man, was yet proprietor of more than one hotel in Kail. The Elder's word settled it, so that "Aye, aye!" chimed from a score of voices. Francie Kemp, the politician, was there, and as he only glared furiously and spat thrice, he too was taken as tendering assent.

P. W. was in the habit of summoning little conferences in the waiting-room to discuss serious questions of politics on week-days, and knotty religious arguments on the Sundays. At some of these meetings I was present, but the cosier warmth of the furnace bench in the Smiddy of Tap-the-Neuk where Smith Amos Gibb reigned had higher attractions. Besides P. W. *would* have his own way; failing that, there was danger of damaged tempers and broken heads. He was willing, yea anxious even unto bending the knee, to argue the point with you; but the moment you tackled him and endeavoured to give a Roland for his Oliver, his blood was up, and he fairly hissed at you in his sharp clear voice.

"Speak saft, freen P. W.," said Andrew from Claypots one day, mildly.

"Speak saft, said the man?" yelled P. W. in high squeaking tones. "I'll speak the truth,—the truth, I tell you," roared he, leaning forward and holding out a clenched fist which would certainly have found a lodgment in Andrew's left eye, had not Jock Watt of the Knowhead seized the Station-Master's coat-tails and pinned him to his seat. P. W. had wonderful energy, and there were times such as this, when, if he failed in reaching the inward man, he made rough onslaughts upon the outward. On Sunday he would prove from chapter and verse in Holy Scripture that all human things were worthless, and human laws and human governments of no avail, "For He wud be in the clouds soon"; but on the Monday he would shake in your face the *Red Republican* (printed in Young's Corner, Strand, London), and demonstrate with unerr-

ing logic that the Parliament Houses were rotten, the Monarchy a blood-sucker, and that England must be saved, and saved at once, by the creation of a strong Republic. No single soul agreed with him, but all stood in awe at the big words of controversy that came from his mouth. "He's a real blethering skate," said Sandie o' the Tanzie; "but Lord! he sets yer bluid a-gallop'in', and it do's ye muckle guid in the stamack." That was the secret of P. W.'s influence over us; he always succeeded in evoking a strong counter current of ideas, and by stirring the sluggish mind was a kind of parish doctor. "He's a damned cliver fallow is P. W., setting a-bye his prayers an' that," said graceless Pete McQueben, and we all thought the saying was true. Judge, therefore, of the comfort that stole into our souls when we found that our inbred conservatism in laws, morals, and religion was never rudely shaken, even by the searching criticisms of such an one as P. W.

I remember the downfall of P. W. in Carglen. It was just before I left it for the first time, and it came upon the occasion of one of those Monday night gatherings in the little waiting-room at the station by Rottenslough. Political questions were in the air, and many of them concerned in no inconsiderable degree the toiling peasantry of our parish. Most of us swore by "Wullie," and we fondly looked for great things from him. A few, a very few, draggle-tail folks were of the opposite persuasion. P. W. was against us all; he held firm to the faith of the *Red Republican*, and that meant the wreck of all old jog-trot methods. Flourishing the newspaper in his hand, now rasping forth his long sentences and anon quoting from the anonymous Grub Street writer, P. W. was determined for once to carry the citadel of our understandings. But most providentially Francie Kemp was one of us. He sat in a snug corner by the fire blazing in a big grate, and any one looking at him

could see a queer malicious twinkle in his eye boding no good for P. W. The sly twinkle increased in brilliance as, in the midst of one of P. W.'s grand elongated sentences, Francie rose and interposed with, "May we licht the pipe, freen P. W.?"

This arrested P. W. at an awkward moment just as he grasped firmly the twisted newspaper with one hand, and was in the act of letting out fiercely with the other. For a few seconds he paused, and we nearly laughed outright; but P. W. said solemnly, "At your ain risk, Francie, at your ain risk."

"I'se risk it," cried Francie, and he struck a light.

P. W. continued his oration, and Francie was soon enveloped in a cloud of smoke. "Ye'll bear me out that I have carried my point, freens," gasped P. W. as he wound up his peroration. Then he sat down and wiped the sweat from his brow.

Francie's eye beamed still brightly under his thick grey eyebrow. There was silence for a brief space, but all faces were turned to the "politeeshun" with the pipe in his cheek. We never knew how Francie might deal with us, so we had to be careful. But Andrew from Claypots here summoned his native courage, thrust his long beak nose out of a distant corner, cried, "Francie, may we hear *you*?" with a curious snifle, and then collapsed into his previous security.

"A' in guid time," said Francie, as he pulled away at his pipe.

"Do ye daur contradic' me, Francie?" called P. W.

"We'll see," replied the politician, all unabashed.

"He'll be drooned in reek sune," cried a youngster from the back.

"Silence!" bawled P. W., who was in the chair; and, "Whist, ye brat," cried Francie in his accustomed phrase.

"I'm inclinit tae agree wi' you, P. W.," said Pete McQueben softly, thinking thus to "draw" the smoker.

"We'll see," added Francie with the air of one who knew what he was about.

"Ye're a real Radikle, Francie," cried P. W.

"Deil a bit," said Francie.

"Weel an' there noo!" clamoured a dozen startled folks, all of whom had sworn by Francie as a true "Radikle, fac as death."

"Nae a Radikle, Francie? I' God's name, what are ye then?" cried the Station-Master.

"We'll see," whispered Francie, still at his ease.

P. W. was annoyed, and assumed a devotional attitude with his eyes tightly closed.

"Let us pray!" shouted the impudent youngster. Thereupon the strong hand of Jock Watt from the Know-head was laid upon the youth's cravat (he wore no collar); the door was opened, and the ill-bred brat ejected. But there was no screen to the window; a chink appeared in the glass, and there this youth placed his ear to listen. Francie saw him, but like all great men he was accessible to flattery, and he said nothing.

"Oot wi't, man," said one, calling to Francie. Then the politician ceased smoking, held the long clay pipe between the finger and thumb of his left hand, grandly swept the air with his right, and said he to the Chairman, "What's yer name?"

"What's my name!" roared P. W. "Why, ye a' ken it weel—Peter Wilkins Grant."

"That's richt," added Francie, "though mayhap ye might hae shortenit it. Were ye born under the Queen?" he continued.

"Well, I was born up in Pittiviach," owned the Station-Master.

"That's the same thing," said Francie. "And ye still haud by the word o' the Lord?" he added.

"Ay, sure; what for no?" said P. W. "In His laws do I meditate day an' nicht."

"Vera weel," said the politician. Just think of the pious man who carried us all upon his shoulders as a daily religious burden, being talked to like this! "An' ye're on the side o'

the Creator?" continued the interlocutor, still showing that ill-boding twinkle in his eye.

"Tae Him do I look," said P. W.

"In a sinfu' an corrupt mind," said Francie.

"Sinfu' and corrupt!" said the Station-Master. "Tak' a heed, Francie; hoo say ye that?"

"For the guid o' yer soul that wull never die," said he.

P. W. now twirled in his chair and nearly foamed at the mouth. Poor man, he was smitten to the heart, for had he not prayed constantly for Francie, as for us all, seven times a day like Daniel of old with face turned to Jerusalem?

"Freens," continued Francie, now rising from his chair and taking off reverently his broad blue bonnet, "Freens, it's a sad case. P. W. is as bad as Joe Forbes; he's a real awthiest."

"O Lord save us a'," cried twenty Cargleners, springing to their feet.

"An awthiest, Francie Kemp!" hissed the Station-Master. "Tak' a care, sir, there's law i' the land."

"Ay, ay, freen P. W., *the Queen's law*," said Francie calmly, and winking slyly at the same time to Andrew from Claypots. Then he went on: "The man's a rank awthiest, freens; far mair warse an awthiest than unbeleevin' Joe. 'Proof,' said ye, Andrew?" (winking again at the man from Claypots). "Oh ay, ye'se hae proofs. Gie's the bit paper, P. W."

It was sadly battered, torn, and twisted, but the Chairman gave it up. Francie was in no hurry, but you could almost have heard the beating of twenty hearts at this moment. The politician had great faith in himself, and he took a reasonable time to put on his spectacles. "Listen!" said he, and he read the damnable word "Atheism" from the title-page.

"Na noo, nae that!" pleaded Jock Watt from the Knowhead.

"It's in prent, fac as death," said Francie Kemp.

Then Jock arose, cast a sorrowful

glance at little P. W., and walked out. Andrew from the Claypots went next, looking grimly at the toes of his big boots. Then one by one the company followed like a flock of sheep. P. W. was left alone with Francie.

Then said the triumphant politician: "Man, yer a' wrang; tack aboot, an' stick tae Wullie. He's nae o' oor perswaashun, but the root o' the matter's in 'im." And then he too stalked solemnly out.

* * * * *

P. W. when left alone took up the paper and glanced at the terrible word "Atheism" undoubtedly appearing thereon. Then he went to his house to thrash the matter out in supplication.

The fame of this night spread through the parish like wildfire, and Francie was ten times a hero now. In due course the news came to the ears of the Reverend Merrison Dean. The Minister's opportunity had come at last, and on the next Sabbath the good man ascended the pulpit, prayed in deep contrition for sinners and unbelievers and the heathen and the infidel, and when the sermon was reached gave out his text, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

Every eye was focused on P. W., who had the recording note-book in readiness. The preacher took three pinches of rappee, repeated his text, and then launched out into the sermon. A dozen sentences were sufficient! P. W. stood up in his pew, gathered all his effects together, put his Sabbath hat ostentatiously upon his head, and then with much dignity sailed to the door. He strode down the toll-road, across the burn by Whiteydell, and then up the brae to the "auld Kirk." One more unfortunate, rashly importunate, had gone to his death under the prosy locutions of the Reverend Saunders Macdonald. But he took his terrible note-book with him, and the Free Kirk Minister breathed a long and audible sigh of relief!

ALEXANDER GORDON.

LORD BEAUPREY.

PART III.

V.

LORD BEAUPREY was able promptly to assure his accomplice that their little plot was working to a charm ; it already made such a difference for the better. Only a week had elapsed, but he felt quite another man ; his life was no longer spent in springing to arms and he had ceased to sleep in his boots. The ghost of his great fear was laid, he could do the things he liked and attend to his neglected affairs. The news had been a bomb in the enemy's camp, and there were plenty of blank faces to testify to the confusion it had wrought. Every one was taken in, and every one had hastened to congratulate him. Lottie Firminger only had written to him in terms of which no notice could be taken, though of course he expected, every time he came in, to find her waiting in his hall. Her mother was coming up to town, and he should have the family on his back ; but, taking them as a single body, he could manage them, and that was a detail. The Ashburys had remained at Bosco till that establishment was favoured with the tidings that so nearly concerned it (they were communicated to Maud's mother by the housekeeper), and then the beautiful sufferer had found, in her defeat, strength to seek another asylum. The two ladies had departed for a destination unknown ; he didn't think they had turned up in London. Guy Firminger averred that there were precious portable objects which he was sure he should miss on returning to his country home.

He came every day to Chester Street, and was evidently much less bored than Mary had prefigured by this needful concession to verisimilitude. It was amusement enough to see the progress of their comedy and

to invent new touches for some of its situations. The girl herself was amused ; it was an opportunity like another for cleverness such as hers, and had much in common with private theatricals, especially with the rehearsals, the most amusing part. Moreover she was good-natured enough to be really pleased at the service it was impossible for her not to recognise that she had rendered. Each of the parties to this queer contract had anecdotes and suggestions for the other, and each reminded the other duly that they must, at every step, keep their story straight. Except for the exercise of this care Mary Gosselin found her duties less onerous than she had feared, and her part, in general, much more passive than active. It consisted indeed largely of murmuring thanks and smiling and looking happy and handsome ; as well as perhaps also in saying, in answer to many questions, that nothing, as yet, was fixed, and of trying to remain humble when people expressed clearly that such a match was a wonder for such a girl. Her mother, on the other hand, was devotedly active. She treated the situation with private humour, but with public zeal, and, making it both real and ideal, told so many fibs about it that there were none left for Mary. The girl had failed to understand Mrs. Gosselin's interest in this elaborate pleasantry ; the good lady had seen in it from the first more than she herself had been able to see. Mary performed her task mechanically, sceptically, but Mrs. Gosselin attacked hers with conviction, and had really the air at moments of thinking that their fiction was a fact. Mary allowed her as little of this attitude as possible and was ironical about her duplicity ;

warnings which the elder lady received with gaiety until one day when repetition had made them act on her nerves. Then she begged her daughter, with sudden asperity, not to talk to her as if she were a fool. She had already had words with Hugh about some aspects of the affair,—so much as this was evident in Chester Street; a smothered discussion which, at the moment, had determined the poor boy to go to Paris with Boston-Brown. The young men came back together after Mary had been “engaged” three weeks, but she remained in ignorance of what passed between Hugh and his mother the night of his return. She had gone to the opera with Lady Whiteroy, after one of her invariable comments on Mrs. Gosselin’s invariable remark that of course Guy Firminger would spend his evening in their box. The remedy for his trouble, Lord Beauprey’s prospective bride had said, was surely worse than the disease; she was in perfect good faith when she wondered that his lordship’s sacrifices, his laborious cultivation of appearances, should “pay”.

Hugh Gosselin dined with his mother, and, at dinner, talked of Paris and of what he had seen and done there; he kept the conversation superficial, and after he had heard how his sister, at the moment, was occupied, asked no question that might have seemed to denote an interest in the success of the experiment for which, in going abroad, he had declined responsibility. His mother could not help observing that he never mentioned Guy Firminger by either of his names, and it struck her as a part of the same detachment that later, up stairs (she sat with him while he smoked), he should suddenly say, as he finished a cigar:

“I return to New York next week.”

“Before your time? What for?”

Mrs. Gosselin was horrified.

“Oh, mamma, you know what for.”

“Because you still resent poor Mary’s good-nature?”

“I don’t understand it, and I don’t

like things I don’t understand; therefore I’d rather not be here to see it. Besides, I really can’t tell a pack of lies.”

Mrs. Gosselin exclaimed and protested; she had arguments to prove that there was no call, at present, for the least deflection from the truth; all that any one had to reply, to any question (and there could be none that was embarrassing save the ostensible determination of the date of the marriage) was that nothing was settled as yet,—a form of words in which, for the life of her, she couldn’t see any perjury. “Why, then, go in for anything in such bad taste, to culminate only in something so absurd?” Hugh demanded. “If the essential part of the matter can’t be spoken of as fixed, nothing is fixed, the deception becomes transparent, and they give the whole idea away. It’s child’s play.”

“That’s why it’s so innocent. All I can tell you is that practically their attitude answers; he’s delighted with its success. Those dreadful women have given him up; they’ve already found some other victim.”

“And how is it all to end, please?”

Mrs. Gosselin was silent a moment.

“Perhaps it won’t end.”

“Do you mean that the engagement will become real?”

Again the good lady said nothing until she broke out: “My dear boy, can’t you trust your mother?”

“Is *that* your speculation? Is that Mary’s? I never heard of anything so odious!” Hugh Gosselin cried. But she defended his sister with eagerness, with a gloss of coaxing, maternal indignation, declaring that Mary’s disinterestedness was complete,—she had the perfect proof of it. Hugh was conscious, as he lighted another cigar, that the conversation was more fundamental than any that he had ever had with his mother, who, however, hung fire but for an instant when he asked her what this “perfect proof” might be. He didn’t doubt of his sister, he admitted that; but the perfect

proof would make him less uncomfortable. It took, finally, the form of a confession from Mrs. Gosselin that the girl evidently liked,--well, greatly liked!--Mr. Boston-Brown. Yes, the good lady had seen, for herself, at the end of the day, that the smooth young American was making up to her and that, time and opportunity aiding, something might very well happen which could not be regarded as satisfactory. She had been very frank with Mary, and had besought her not to commit herself to a suitor who, in the very nature of the case, couldn't meet some of their views. Mary, who pretended not to know what their "views" were, had denied that she was in danger; but Mrs. Gosselin had assured her that she had all the air of it, and she had said, triumphantly: "Agree to what Lord Beauprey asks of you, and I believe you." Mary had wished to be believed,--so she had agreed. There was all the witchcraft any one could use!

Mrs. Gosselin out-talked her son, but there were two or three plain questions that he came back to; and the basis of these bore upon the ground of her aversion to poor Boston-Brown. He told her again, as he had told her before, that his friend was that rare thing, a maker of money who was also a man of culture. He was a gentleman to his finger-tips, accomplished, capable, kind, with a charming mother and two lovely sisters (she should see them!) the sort of fellow, in short, whom it was folly to make light of.

"I believe it all, and if I had three daughters he should be very welcome to one of them."

"You might easily have had three daughters who wouldn't attract him at all. You've had the good fortune to have one who does, and I think you do wrong to interfere with it."

"My eggs are in one basket, then, and that's a reason the more for preferring Lord Beauprey," said Mrs. Gosselin.

"Then it is your calculation--?" stammered Hugh in dismay; on which

she coloured and requested that he would be a little less rough with his mother. She would rather part with him immediately, sad as that would be, than that he should attempt to undo what she had done. When Hugh replied that it was not to Mary, but to Beauprey himself, that he judged it important he should speak, she informed him that a rash remonstrance might do his sister a cruel wrong. Dear Guy was *most* attentive.

"If you mean that he really cares for her, there's the less excuse for his taking such a liberty with her. He's either in love with her or he isn't. If he is, let him make her a serious offer; if he isn't, let him leave her alone."

Mrs. Gosselin looked at her son with a kind of patient joy. "He's in love with her, but he doesn't know it."

"He ought to know it, and if he's so stupid I don't see that we ought to consider him."

"Don't worry,--he *shall* know it!" Mrs. Gosselin cried; and, continuing to struggle with Hugh, she insisted on the delicacy of the situation. She made a certain impression on him, though on confused grounds; she spoke at one moment as if he was to forbear because the business was a mere fable that happened to contain a convenience for a distressed friend, and at another as if one ought to strain a point because there were great possibilities at stake. She was most lucid when she pictured the social position and other advantages of a peer of the realm. What had those of an American stockbroker, however amiable, to compare with them? She was inconsistent, but she was diplomatic, and the result of the discussion was that Hugh Gosselin became conscious of a dread of injuring his sister. He became conscious, at the same time, of a still greater apprehension, that of seeing her arrive at the agreeable in a tortuous, a second-rate manner. He might keep his peace to please his mother, but he couldn't enjoy it, and

he actually took his departure, travelling in company with Boston-Brown, who, of course, before going, waited on the ladies in Chester Street to thank them for the kindness they had shown him. It couldn't be kept from Guy Firminger that Hugh was not happy, though when they met, which was only once or twice before he quitted London, Mary Gosselin's brother flattered himself that he was too proud to show it. He had always liked old loafing Guy, and it was disagreeable to him not to like him now; but he was aware that he must either quarrel with him definitely or not at all, and that he had passed his word to his mother. Therefore his attitude was strictly negative; he took, with the parties to it, no notice whatever of the "engagement," and he couldn't help it if, to other people, he had the air of not being content. They doubtless thought him strangely fastidious. Perhaps he was; the tone of London struck him, in some respects, as very horrid; he had grown in a manner away from it. Mary was impenetrable; tender, gay, charming, but with no patience, as she said, for his premature flight. Except when Lord Beauprey was present you would not have dreamed that he existed for her. In his company,—he had to be present more or less of course—she was simply like any other English girl who disliked effusiveness. They had each the same manner, that of persons of rather a shy tradition who were on their guard against public "spooning." They practised their fraud with good taste, a good taste mystifying to Boston-Brown, who thought their precautions excessive. When he took leave of Mary Gosselin her eyes consented, for a moment, to look deep down into his. He had been from the first of the opinion that they were beautiful, and he was more mystified than ever.

If Guy Firminger had failed to ask Hugh Gosselin frankly if he had a fault to find with what they were doing, this was, in spite of old friendship, simply because he was too happy

now to care much whom he didn't please, to care at any rate for criticism. He had ceased to be critical himself, and his high prosperity could take his blamelessness for granted. His happiness would have been offensive if people generally hadn't liked him, for it consisted of a kind of monstrous candid comfort. To take all sorts of things for granted was still his great, his delightful characteristic; but it didn't prevent his showing imagination and tact and taste in particular circumstances. He made, in their little comedy, all the right jokes and none of the wrong ones; the girl had an acute sense that there were some jokes that would have been detestable. She gathered that it was universally supposed that she was having a brilliant season, and something of the glory of an enviable future seemed indeed to hang about her. People no doubt thought it odd that she didn't go about more with her future husband; but those who knew anything about her knew that she had never done exactly as other girls did. She had her own ways, her own freedoms and her own scruples. Certainly he made the London weeks much richer than they had ever been for a limited young person; he put more things into them, so that they became dense and complicated. This frightened her at moments, especially when she thought with compunction that she was deceiving her very friends. She didn't mind taking the vulgar world in, but there were people she hated not to let into the secret. She could let no one into it, of course, and indeed she would have been ashamed. There were hours when she wanted to stop,—she had such a dread of doing too much; hours when she thought with dismay that the fiction of the rupture was still to come, with its horrid train of new untrue things. She spoke of it repeatedly to her confederate, who only postponed and postponed, told her she would never dream of forsaking him so soon if she measured the good

she was doing him. She did measure it, however, when she met him in the great world ; she was of course always meeting him ; that was the only way appearances were kept up. There was a certain attitude she could allow him to take on these occasions ; it covered and carried off their subterfuge. He could talk to her unmolested ; for herself, she never spoke of anything but the charming girls, everywhere present, among whom he could freely choose. He didn't protest, because to choose freely was what he wanted, and they discussed these young ladies one by one. Some she recommended, some she disparaged, but it was almost the only subject she tolerated. It was her system in short, and she wondered he didn't get tired of it ; she was so tired of it herself.

She tried other things that she thought he might find wearisome, but his good-humour was proof. He was now really for the first time enjoying his promotion, his wealth, his insight into the terms on which the world offered itself to the happy few, and that made an element that muffled irritation. Once, at some glittering ball, he asked her if she should be jealous if he were to dance again with Lady Whiteroy, with whom he had danced already, and this was the only occasion on which he had come near making a joke of the wrong sort. She showed him what she thought of it and made him feel that the way to be forgiven was to spend the rest of the evening with that lovely creature. Now that the phalanx of the pressingly nubile was held in check, there was accordingly nothing to prevent his passing his time pleasantly. Before he had taken this effective way the manœuvring mother, when she spied him flirting with a married woman, felt that in urging a virgin daughter's superior claims she worked for righteousness as well as for the poor girl. But Mary Gosselin protected these scandals, practically, by the still greater scandal of her indifference ; so that he was in the odd position of

having waited to be bound to know what it was to be undisturbed. He had, in other words, the maximum of security with the minimum of privation. The lovely creatures of Lady Whiteroy's order thought Mary Gosselin charming, but they were the first to see through her falsity.

All this carried the young pair to the middle of July ; but nearly a month before that, one night under the summer stars, on the deck of the steamer that was to reach New York on the morrow, something had passed between Hugh Gosselin and his rather meditative American friend. The night was warm and splendid ; these were their last hours at sea, and Hugh, who had been playing whist in the cabin, came up, very late, to take an observation before turning in. It was in this way that he chanced on his companion, who was leaning over the stern of the ship and gazing off, beyond its phosphorescent track, at the muffled, moaning ocean, the backward darkness, everything he had relinquished. Hugh stood by him for a moment, then asked him what he was thinking about. Boston-Brown gave at first no answer, after which he turned round and, with his back against the guard of the deck, looked up at the multiplied stars. "He has it badly," Hugh Gosselin mentally commented. At last his friend replied : "About something you said yesterday."

"I forget what I said yesterday."

"You spoke of your sister's intended marriage ; it was the only time you had spoken of it. You seemed to intimate that it might not, after all, take place."

Hugh hesitated a little. "Well, it won't take place. They're not engaged, not really. This is a secret, an absolute secret. I wouldn't tell any one else ; but I'm willing to tell *you*. It may make a difference to you."

Boston-Brown turned his head ; he looked at Hugh a minute through the fresh darkness. "It does make a

difference to me. But I don't understand," he added.

"Neither do I. I don't like it. It's a pretence, a temporary make-believe, to help Beauprey."

"To help him?"

"He's so run after."

The young American stared, ejaculated, mused. "Oh, yes,—your mother told me."

"It's a sort of invention of my mother's, and of his (very absurd, I think), till he can see his way. Mary has agreed to see him through these first months. It's ridiculous, but I don't know that it hurts her."

"Oh!" said Boston-Brown.

"I don't know, either, that it does her any good."

"No!" said Boston-Brown. Then he added: "It's certainly very kind of her."

"It's a case of old friends," Hugh explained, inadequately, as he felt. "He has always been in and out of our house."

"But how will it end?"

"I haven't the least idea."

Boston-Brown was silent; he faced about to the stern again and stared at the rush of the ship. Then, shifting his position once more: "Won't the engagement, before they've done, turn into a real one?"

Hugh felt as if his mother were listening. "I doubt it much. If there were even a remote chance of that, Mary wouldn't have consented."

"But mayn't *he* easily find that—charming as she is—he's in love with her?"

"He's too much taken up with himself."

"That's just a reason," said Boston-Brown. "Love is selfish." He considered a moment longer, then he went on: "And mayn't *she* find—?"

"Find what?" said Hugh, as he hesitated.

"That she likes *him*, very much."

"She likes him of course, else she wouldn't have come to his assistance. But her certainty about herself must have been just what made her not

object to lending herself to the arrangement. She could do it decently because she doesn't seriously care for him. If she did—" Hugh suddenly stopped.

"If she did?" his friend repeated.

"It would have been odious."

"I see," said Boston-Brown, gently.

"But how will they break off?"

"It will be Mary who'll break off."

"Perhaps she'll find it difficult."

"She'll require a pretext."

"I see," mused Boston-Brown shifting his position again.

"She'll find one," Hugh declared.

"I hope so," his companion responded.

For some minutes neither of them spoke; then at last Hugh asked, "Are you in love with her?"

"Oh, my dear fellow!" Boston-Brown wailed. He instantly added, "Will it be any use for me to go back?"

Again Hugh felt as if his mother were listening. But he answered, "Do go back."

"It's awfully strange," said Boston-Brown. "I'll go back."

"You had better wait a couple of months, you know."

"Mayn't I lose her, then?"

"No—she'll only get the more tired of it."

"I'll go back!" the American repeated, as if he hadn't heard. He was restless, agitated; he had evidently been much affected. He fidgeted away dimly, moved up the level length of the deck. Hugh Gosselin lingered longer at the stern; he fell into the attitude in which he had found the other, leaning over it and looking back at the great vague distance they had come. He thought of his mother.

VI.

To remind her devoted mother of the vanity of certain expectations which she more than suspected her of entertaining, Mary Gosselin, while she felt herself intensely watched (it had

all brought about a horrid new situation at home), produced every day some fresh illustration of the fact that people were no longer a bit taken in. Moreover these illustrations were not invented; the girl believed in them, and when once she had begun to notice them she saw them multiply fast. Lady White-roy, for one, was distinctly suspicious; she had taken the liberty more than once of asking the future Lady Beauprey what in the world was the matter with her. Brilliant figure as she was, and occupied with her own pleasures, which were of a very independent nature, she had nevertheless constituted herself Miss Gosselin's very kind friend and patroness; she took a particular interest in her marriage, an interest all the greater as it rested not only on a freely-professed liking for her, but on a lively sympathy with the other party to the transaction. Lady White-roy, who was very pretty and very clever, and whom Mary secretly but profoundly mistrusted, delighted in them both, in short; so much so that Mary judged herself happy to be in a false position, so certain should she have been to be jealous had she been in a true one. This charming woman threw out inquiries that made the girl not care to meet her eyes; and Mary ended by forming a theory of the sort of marriage for Lord Beauprey that Lady White-roy would really have appreciated. It would have been a marriage to a fool, a marriage, say, to Charlotte Firminger. She would have her reasons for preferring that; and, as regarded the actual prospect, she had only discovered that Mary was even profounder than herself.

It will be understood how much our young lady was in the central current when I mention that in spite of this complicated consciousness she was one of the ornaments (Guy Firminger was of course another) of the party entertained by her gracious friend and Lord White-roy during the Goodwood week. She came back to town with the firm intention of putting an end

to a comedy which had more than ever become odious to her; in consequence of which she had, on this subject, with her fellow-comedian a scene, —the scene she had dreaded—half-pathetic, half-ridiculous. He appealed to her, wrestled with her, took his usual ground that she was saving his life without really lifting a finger. He denied that the public was not satisfied with their pretexts for postponement, their explanations of delay; what else was expected of a man who would wish to celebrate his nuptials on a suitable scale, but who had the misfortune to have had, one after another, three grievous bereavements? He promised not to molest her for the next three months, to go away till his "mourning" was over, to go abroad, to let her do as she liked. He wouldn't come near her, he wouldn't even write (no one would know it), if she would let him keep up the mere form of their fiction; and he would let her off the very first instant he definitely perceived that this expedient had ceased to be effective. She couldn't judge of that,—she must let him judge; and it was a matter in which she could surely trust to his honour.

Mary Gosselin trusted to it, but she insisted on his going away. When he took such a tone as that she couldn't help being moved; he breathed with such frank, charming lips on the irritation she had stored up against him. Guy Firminger went to Homburg, and if his confederate consented not to clip the slender thread by which this particular engagement still hung, she made short work with every other. A dozen invitations, for Cowes, for the country, for Scotland, beckoned her forward, made a pathway of flowers, but she withdrew from them all. When her mother, aghast, said to her, "What then will you do?" she replied in a very conclusive manner, "I'll go home!" Mrs. Gosselin was wise enough not to struggle; she saw that the thread was delicate, that it must dangle in quiet air. She

therefore travelled back with her daughter to homely Hampshire, feeling that they presented less appearance than they had done for many weeks. On the August afternoons they sat again on the little lawn on which Guy Firminger had found them the day he first became eloquent about the perils of the desirable young bachelor; and it was on this very spot that, toward the end of the month, and with some surprise, they beheld Mr. Boston-Brown once more approach. He had come back from America; he had arrived but a few days before; he was staying, of all places in the world, at the inn in the village.

His explanation of this anomaly was of all explanations the oddest; he had reappeared in England for the particular purpose of sketching. There was nothing more sketchable than the odds and ends of Hampshire, and he was so good as to include Mrs. Gosselin's charming premises, and even their charming occupants, in his artistic programme. He fell to work with all speed, with a sort of feverish eagerness; he seemed possessed indeed by an artistic frenzy. He sketched everything on the place, and when he had represented an object once he went straight at it again. His advent was soothing to Mary Gosselin, in spite of his nervous activity; it must be admitted, indeed, that at the moment he arrived she had already felt herself in quieter waters. The August afternoons, the relinquishment of London, the simplified life, had rendered her a service which, if she had freely qualified it, she would have described as a restoration of her self-respect. If poor Guy found any profit in such conditions as these, there was no great reason to gainsay him. She had so completely shaken off responsibility that she took scarcely more than a languid interest in the fact, communicated to her by Lady Whiteroy, that Charlotte Firminger had also, as the newspapers said, "proceeded" to Hom-burg. Lady Whiteroy knew, for Lady

Whiteroy had "proceeded" as well; her physician had discovered in her constitution a pressing need for such a step. She chronicled Charlotte's presence, and even to some extent her behaviour, among the fatigued and afflicted, but it was not till some time afterwards that Mary learned how Miss Firminger's pilgrimage had been made under her ladyship's protection. This was a further sign that, like Mrs. Gosselin, Lady Whiteroy had ceased to struggle; she had, in town, only shrugged her shoulders ambiguously on being informed that Lord Beauprey's intended was going down to her stupid home.

The fulness of Mrs. Gosselin's renunciation was apparent during the stay of the young American in the neighbourhood of that retreat. She occupied herself with her knitting, her garden and the cares of a punctilious hospitality, but she had no appearance of any other occupation. When people came to tea, Boston-Brown was always there, and she had the self-control to attempt to say nothing that could assuage their natural surprise. Mrs. Ashbury came one day with poor Maud, and the two elder ladies, as they had done more than once before, looked for some moments into each other's eyes. This time it was not a look of defiance, it was rather,—or it would have been for an observer completely in the secret—a look of invitation and of acceptance, a look of arrangement. There was, however, no one completely in the secret save perhaps Mary, and Mary didn't heed. The arrangement, at any rate, was ineffectual; Mrs. Gosselin might mutely say, over the young American's eager, talkative shoulders, "Yes, you may have him if you can get him;" the most rudimentary experiments demonstrated that he was not to be got. Nothing passed on this subject between Mary and her mother, whom the girl none the less knew to be holding her breath and continuing to watch. She counted it more and more as one

unpleasant result of her conspiracy with Guy Firminger that it almost poisoned a relation that had always been sweet. It was to show that she was independent of it that she did as she liked now, which was almost always as Boston-Brown liked. When in the first days of September,—it was in the warm, clear twilight, and they happened, amid the scent of fresh hay, to be leaning side by side on a stile—he told her more fully and particularly than he had done before what he had come back to England for, she of course made no allusion to a prior tie. On the other hand she insisted on his going up to London by the first train the next day. He was to wait,—that was distinctly understood—for his answer.

She desired, meanwhile, to write immediately to Guy Firminger, but as he had kept his promise of not irritating her with letters she was uncertain as to his actual whereabouts ; she was only sure he would have left Homburg. Lady Whiteroy had become silent, so there were no more sidelights, and she was on the point of telegraphing to London for an address when she received a telegram from Bosco. The proprietor of that seat had arrived there the day before, and he found he could make trains fit if she would, on the morrow, allow him to come over and see her for a day or two. He had returned sooner than their agreement allowed, but she answered "Come," and she showed his missive to her mother, who, at the sight of it, wept with strange passion. Mary said to her : "For heaven's sake, don't let him see you !" She lost no time ; she told him, on the morrow, as soon as he entered the house that she could accommodate him no further.

"All right,—it *is* no use," he answered ; "they're at it again !"

"You see you've gained nothing !" she replied triumphantly. She had instantly recognised that he was different, how much had happened.

"I've gained some of the happiest days of my life."

"Oh, that was not what you tried for !"

"Indeed it was, and I got exactly what I wanted," said Guy Firminger. They were in the cool little drawing-room where the morning light was dim. Guy Firminger had a sunburnt appearance, as in England people returning from other countries are apt to have, and Mary thought he had never looked so well. It was odd, but it was noticeable, that he had grown much handsomer since he had become a personage. He paused a moment, smiling at her while her mysterious eyes rested on him, and then he added : "Nothing ever worked better. It's no use now,—people see ; but I've got a start. I wanted to turn round and look about, and I *have* turned round and looked about. There are things I've escaped. I'm afraid you'll never understand how deeply I'm indebted to you."

"Oh, it's all right," said Mary Gosselin.

There was another short silence ; after which he went on : "I've come back sooner than I promised, but only to be strictly fair. I began to see that we couldn't hold out and that it was my duty to let you off. From that moment I was bound to put an end to your situation. I might have done so by letter, but that seemed scarcely decent. It's all I came back for, and it's what I telegraphed to you for yesterday."

Mary hesitated an instant, she reflected intensely. What had happened, what would happen, was that, if she didn't take care, the signal for the end of their little arrangement would not have appeared to come from herself. She particularly wished it not to come from any one else, she had even a horror of that ; so that after an instant she hastened to say : "I was on the very point of telegraphing to you,—I was only waiting for your address."

Telegraphing to me ? He seemed rather blank.

"To tell you that our absurd affair really, this time, can't go on another

hour,—to put a complete stop to it."

"Oh!" said Guy Firminger.

"So it's all right."

"You've always hated it!" laughed Guy; and his laugh sounded slightly foolish to the girl.

"I found yesterday that I hated it more than ever."

Lord Beauprey showed a quickened attention. "For what reason—yesterday?"

"I would rather not tell you, please. Perhaps some time you'll find it out."

He continued to look at her, brightly and fixedly, with his confused cheerfulness. Then he said with a vague, courteous alacrity, "I see, I see!" She had an impression that he didn't see; but it didn't matter, she was nervous and quite preferred that he shouldn't. They both got up, and in a moment he exclaimed: "Well, I'm intensely sorry it's over! it has been so charming."

"You've been very good about it, I mean very reasonable," Mary said, to say something. Then she felt, in her nervousness, that this was just what she ought not to have said; it sounded ironical and provoking, whereas she had meant it as pure good-nature. "Of course you'll stay to luncheon?" she continued. She was bound in common hospitality to speak of that, and he answered that it would give him the greatest pleasure. After this her apprehension increased, and it was confirmed in particular by the manner in which he suddenly asked:

"By the way, what reason shall we give?"

"What reason?"

"For our rupture. Don't let us seem to have quarrelled."

"We can't help that," said Mary.

"Nothing else will account for our behaviour."

"Well, I sha'n't say anything about you."

"Do you mean you'll let people think it was you who were tired of it?"

"I mean I sha'n't blame you."

"You ought to behave as if you cared," said Mary.

Guy Firminger laughed, but he looked worried, and he evidently was puzzled. "You must act as if you had jilted me."

"You're not the sort of person, unfortunately, that people jilt."

Lord Beauprey appeared to accept this statement as incontestable; not with elation, however, but with candid regret, the slightly embarrassed recognition of a fundamental obstacle. "Well, it's no one's business, at any rate, is it?"

"No one's, and that's what I shall say if people question me. Besides," Mary added, "they'll see for themselves."

"What will they see?"

"I mean they'll understand. And now we had better join mamma."

It was his evident inclination to linger in the room after he had said this that gave her complete alarm. Mrs. Gosselin was in another room, in which she sat in the morning, and Mary moved in that direction, pausing only in the hall for him to accompany her. She wished to get him into the presence of a third person. In the hall he joined her, and in doing so he laid his hand gently on her arm. Then, looking into her eyes with all the pleasantness of his honesty, he said: "It will be very easy for me to appear to care,—for I *shall* care. I shall care immensely!" Lord Beauprey added smiling.

Anything, it struck her, was better than that,—than that he should say: "We'll keep on, if you like (*I should!*) only this time it will be serious. Hold me to it,—do; don't let me go; lead me on to the altar,—really!" Some such words as these, she believed, were rising to his lips, and she had an insurmountable horror of hearing them. It was as if, well enough meant on *his* part, they would do her a sort of dishonour, so that all her impulse was quickly to avert them. That was not the way she wanted to be asked in marriage. "Thank you very much,"

she said, "but it doesn't in the least matter. You will seem to have been jilted,—so it's all right!"

"All right! You mean—?" He hesitated, he had coloured a little, and his eyes questioned her.

"I'm engaged to be married,—in earnest."

"Oh!" said Lord Beauprey.

"You asked me just now if I had a special reason for having been on the point of telegraphing to you, and I said I had. That was my special reason."

"I see!" said Lord Beauprey. He looked grave for a few seconds, then he gave an awkward smile. But he behaved with perfect tact and discretion, didn't even ask her who the gentleman in the case might be. He congratulated her in the dark, as it were, and if the effect of this was indeed a little odd, she liked him for his quick perception of the fine fitness of pulling up short. Besides, he extracted the name of the gentleman soon enough from her mother, in whose company they now immediately found themselves. Mary left Guy Firminger with the good lady for half an hour before luncheon; and when the girl came back it was to observe that she had been crying again. It was dreadful,—what she might have been saying. Their guest, however, at luncheon was not lachrymose; he was natural, but he was talkative and gay. Mary liked the way he now behaved, and, more particularly, the way he departed immediately after the meal. As soon as he was gone Mrs. Gosselin broke out, suppliantly, "Mary!" But her daughter replied: "I know, mamma, perfectly, what you're going to say, and if you attempt to say it I shall leave the room." With this threat (day after day, for the following time,) she kept the terrible appeal unuttered until it was too late for an appeal to be of use. That afternoon she wrote to Boston-Brown that she accepted his offer of marriage.

Guy Firminger departed altogether;

he went abroad again and to far countries. He was therefore not able to be present at the nuptials of Miss Gosselin and the young American whom he had entertained at Bosco, which took place in the middle of November. Had he been in England, however, he probably would have felt impelled by a due regard for past verisimilitude to abstain from giving his countenance to such an occasion. His absence from the country contributed to the needed even if astonishing effect of his having been jilted; so, also, did the reputed vastness of Boston-Brown's young income, which, in London, was grossly exaggerated. Hugh Gosselin had perhaps a little to do with this; as he had sacrificed a part of his summer holiday, he got another month and came out to his sister's wedding. He took public comfort in his brother-in-law; nevertheless he listened with attention to a curious communication made him by his mother after the young couple had started for Italy; even to the point of bringing out the inquiry, (in answer to her assertion that poor Guy had been ready to place everything he had at Mary's feet): "Then why the devil didn't he do it?"

"From simple delicacy! He didn't want to make her feel as if she had lent herself to an artifice only on purpose to get hold of him,—to treat her as if she too had been at bottom one of the very harpies she helped him to elude."

Hugh thought a moment. "That was delicate."

"He's the dearest creature in the world. He's on his guard, he's prudent, he tested himself by separation. Then he came back to England in love with her. She might have had it all!"

"I'm glad she didn't get it that way."

"She had only to wait,—to put an end to their deception, harmless as it was, for the present, but still wait. She might have broken off in a way that would have made it come on again better."

"That's exactly what she didn't want."

"I mean as a quite separate incident," said Mrs. Gosselin.

"I loathed their deception, harmless as it was!" her son observed.

Mrs. Gosselin, for a moment, made no answer; then she turned away from the fire into which she had been pensively gazing, with the ejaculation, "Poor dear Guy!"

"I can't for the life of me see that he's to be pitied."

"He'll marry Charlotte Firminger."

"If he's such an ass as that it's his own affair."

"Bessie Whiteroy will bring it about."

"What has she got to do with it?"

"She wants to get hold of him."

"Then why will she marry him to another woman?"

"Because in that way she can select the other,—a woman he won't care for. It will keep him from taking some one that's nicer."

Hugh Gosselin stared,—he laughed out. "Lord, mamma, you're deep!"

"Indeed I am, I see much more."

"What do you see?"

"Mary won't in the least care for America. Don't tell me she will," Mrs. Gosselin added, "for you know perfectly you don't believe it."

"She'll care for her husband, she'll care for everything that concerns him."

"He's very nice, in his little way he's delightful. But as an alternative to Lord Beauprey he's ridiculous!"

"Mary's in a position in which she has nothing to do with alternatives."

"For the present, yes, but not for ever. She'll have enough of your New York; they'll come back here. I see the future dark," Mrs. Gosselin pursued, inexorably musing.

"Tell me then all you see."

"She'll find poor Guy wretchedly married, and she'll be very sorry for him."

"Do you mean that he'll make love to her? You give a queer account of your paragon."

"He'll value her sympathy. I see life as it is."

"You give a queer account of your daughter."

"I don't give any account. She'll behave perfectly," Mrs. Gosselin somewhat inconsequently subjoined.

"Then what are you afraid of?"

"She'll be sorry for him, and it will be all a worry."

"A worry to whom?"

The good lady was silent a moment. "To me," she replied. "And to you as well."

"Then they mustn't come back."

"That will be a greater worry still."

"Surely not a greater,—a smaller. We'll put up with the lesser evil."

"Nothing will prevent her coming to a sense, eventually, of what might have been. And when they *both* recognise it——"

"It will be very dreadful!" Hugh exclaimed, completing, gaily, his mother's phrase. "I don't see, however," he added, "what in all this you do with Bessie Whiteroy."

"Oh, he'll be tired of her; she's hard, she'll have become despotic. I see life as it is," the good lady repeated.

"Then all I can say is that it's not very nice! But they sha'n't come back; I'll attend to that!" said Hugh Gosselin, who has attended to it up to this time successfully, though the rest of his mother's prophecy is so far accomplished (it was her second hit) as that Charlotte Firminger is now, strange as it may seem, Lady Beauprey.

HENRY JAMES.

LEAVES FROM A NOTE-BOOK.

I.

THACKERAY has somewhere commented on the peculiar irony of fate which decreed that G. P. R. James,—that old friend of so many boyhoods—should end his days at Venice: “The only city in Europe where the famous ‘Two Cavaliers’ cannot by any possibility be seen riding together.” One is almost tempted to fancy that the saturnine old beldame must have had a hand in the choice of Dean Burgon’s biographer. Burgon not only held very decided views on the subject of biography, and expressed them as his manner was, in a very decided fashion, but he also practised what he preached in a way not often given to critics, and perhaps not always followed by them when given. In the preface to the *Lives of Twelve Good Men*,—the last book he wrote, which he did not live to see published, but by which probably, more than by anything else he did or said, his fame will live—occurs this notable passage.

I have long cherished the conviction that it is to be wished that the world could be persuaded that biography might with advantage be confined within much narrower limits than at present is customary. Very few are the men who require five hundred pages all to themselves; far fewer will bear expansion into two such volumes. Of how vast a number of our most distinguished friends would forty, fifty, or sixty pages contain all that really requires to be handed down to posterity.

Is it not rather to the biographer that this moral pressure needs to be applied? The world, I take it, could be persuaded very easily. It is indeed conceivable that with a tolerable proportion of our most distinguished friends posterity will not greatly care to concern itself even to the extent of forty pages. But this question has been discussed before in these Leaves;

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and at any rate on the general truth of Burgon’s conviction there is not likely to be much dispute. The man who could show so brave a front to what is really one of the most portentous nuisances of our literary state, and who could moreover practise with such masterly skill what he so courageously preached, deserved a better fate when his own time came to suffer from the too common lot of the Victorian mortal.

It is not of course to be said that there is no good thing in the two ample volumes which Dean Goulburn has compiled to the memory of his friend. They are full of good things, for they are full of Burgon’s own words, and they were always good in the sense that, though sometimes whimsical, sometimes rash, sometimes perhaps inclining to arrogance, they were never flat, tiresome, unmeaning, were always living, never mere dead bones of language. They are full too of that admiring sympathy without some tincture of which, even though we smile at it, when we do not call it by a contemptuous name, no biography can ever be really worth anything; and full also of eloquent passages which invariably redound to the dead man’s praise, if not always to the living man’s judgment. All, or nearly all the materials, in short, are there for such a biography of Burgon as he himself would doubtless have wished to see written, had he wished for one at all, and could himself have written better than any man he left behind him. But such of them as are interesting and essential are encumbered by too much that is neither, and the whole has been put together (thrown together, one is tempted to say) on a most disordered and baffling plan, entailing endless repetitions and complications liable to promote a frame

of mind unsuitable to the contemplation of one whose mission it was to preach peace and good-will to men.

Fortunately there is an easy and a pleasant remedy at hand. The April number of *The Quarterly Review* contains an article on Burgon in which the essential facts of the man have been rescued from these two volumes and presented in a singularly clear and spirited manner, with much of the insight and sympathy that he always brought to his own studies in portraiture, and with more tact and sobriety than he always allowed himself to bring. The subject could for many reasons have been no easy one. The atmosphere of controversy is contagious, and controversy to Burgon in his public capacity seems to have been the very breath of life. It must have been more than commonly difficult so to handle such a master of the strident scourge as to avoid offence to friends or foes, or indeed to both; and this part of his business the reviewer has managed with admirable good taste and good sense, saying all that was needful to preserve his article from mere panegyric, and nothing that could tend to give it a contrary bias. A notable instance of this is the passage wherein he has reduced to reasonable proportions the biographer's startling claim for Burgon that he was "the leading religious teacher of his time," the teacher who "brought all the resources of genius and profound theological learning to rebut the encroachments of rationalism." The passage is too long to quote, but it is really remarkable for the dexterity with which the reviewer has put Burgon in his proper place as the champion of the Written Word, without forgetting the motto he has taken (from Wolsey's bust in Christ Church) for his article, *nomen intra has ædes semper venerandum*, and without, as one may hope and believe, unduly ruffling the feelings of the venerable biographer. Rarely indeed has this peculiarly thorny quarter of the great field of religious controversy been trod more delicately; for without

committing himself to any particular pledge he has contrived to be polite and conciliatory to all sides.

In his *Revision Revised* (which, like his *Lives of Twelve Good Men*, was in great part based upon articles in *The Quarterly Review*) Burgon fell with all his weight, and he could fall very heavily, on that cruel tampering with the most beautiful book in our language. The phrase *attacked* is used much too recklessly of the criticism which refuses to echo the popular cant of the hour; but of Burgon's critical manner it was often sufficiently appropriate. His method of developing his views did indeed not seldom nor remotely suggest that which Mr. Micawber feared he might be led to employ towards his wife's family. On one point however of his attack on the Revisers the general feeling was undoubtedly on his side. Burgon's theories on textual criticism it is for scholars to examine and judge: but his strictures on the diction of the New Version appeal to all who can recognize the beauty and power of the Old Version. All Englishmen are at liberty to marvel at the unmeaning barbarity (and the phrase, though rough, is in truth, not extravagant) which has so often substituted for those grand melodious words of counsel and comfort, that have sunk deep into innumerable thousands of aching hearts, language bald and uncouth as that in which a school-boy renders the sense indeed, and mars all the beauty of Homer and Virgil. The reviewer pertinently quotes the following passage from Matthew Arnold, a critic, as he justly says, but little prejudiced in favour of theologians.

The Dean of Chichester has attacked the revisers with exceeding great vehemence, and many of his reasons for hostility to them I do not share. But when he finally fixes on a test-passage, and condemns them by it, he shows, I must say, a genuine literary instinct, a true sense for style, and brings to my mind that it was given to him to produce, long ago, in an Oxford prize-poem, that excellent line describing Petra,

which Arthur Stanley used to praise so warmly :—

“A rose-red city, half as old as time.”

And then Arnold, quoting the two versions of a passage from the first chapter of the Second Epistle of Peter, in contrasting which Burgon thought that he had done enough to condemn the Revisers, adds,—“And so, in truth, he has.” And so in truth will say all readers with any sense for style. If one who is neither scholar nor student may be permitted, I would venture to add another instance to this disastrous passion for meddling which seems to have so strangely seized a body of learned and clever men. In the last chapter of the Book of Revelation,—it was only with the New Testament that Burgon was then concerned—occurs this well-known passage: “I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.” In the Revised Version the passage stands: “I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star.” By the removal of one syllable and the alteration of another the whole rhythm of the passage has been hopelessly spoiled without any textual or exegetical advantage.

It was in 1845, after three unsuccessful attempts, that Burgon won the prize for English verse at Oxford with his poem on Petra. He was then in his thirty-second year, a very Nestor among undergraduates, but he had been unable to make his way to the University till the failure of his father's business released him from a commercial career and left him free to follow his own bent which from boyhood had been to the Church. The couplet containing the line so much admired by Stanley runs as follows :

Match me such marvel, save in Eastern
clime,—
A rose-red city, half as old as time.

No wonder that it at once caught the popular ear, and received, as the reviewer reminds us, the last honours of

parody by a wit who wished to commemorate the antiquity of a celebrated Don :

Match me such marvel, save in college
port,
That rose-red liquor half as old as Short !

Burgon's lines probably share with the couplet from Heber's poem on Palestine suggested by Walter Scott at the memorable breakfast in Brasenose, and one or two from Milman's on the Apollo Belvidere, the distinction of being the only verses inspired by Sir Roger Newdigate that have fixed themselves in the public memory. Such flights of academic fancy as the famous passage which records Nebuchadnezzar's sensations on being

Turned out to grass
With horned oxen and the savage ass,

belong, it is to be feared, to the region of myth ; though there is more authority for the concluding couplet of that elegy on the murdered Queen of France which did *not* win the prize five-and-twenty years ago :

Then may our lively neighbours ne'er
forget
The woes of martyred Marie Antoinette.

But jesting apart, these three men have earned their right to a place in every collection of familiar quotations by virtue of their undergraduate Muse.

When Burgon's couplet went the round of the newspapers on his death, some Devil's Advocate (one is never lacking on such occasions) undertook to show that the thought in the latter half of the last line was stolen from Rogers. Whether he proved his case I do not remember, but the thought by itself is doubtless of no striking originality. For my own part I was more interested about that time in reading the earliest written, but last published book of Sir Henry Layard's Eastern travels, and in finding that Petra had worn to his eyes none of those roseate hues in which Burgon's fancy had steeped them. The surrounding scenery had impressed him

only by "its extreme desolation and savage character," and by "the absence of all vegetation to relieve the solemn monotony of the brown barren soil." The gorge through which the ruins are approached, and on which Dean Stanley has almost exhausted even his picturesque vocabulary, was in Sir Henry's eye only "long" and "narrow." Burgon was born in the East, at Smyrna, where business (the business, as it was called, of a Turkey merchant) kept his father for some years; but he left it too soon to carry any memories of it away with him. In later life, some fifteen years or so after leaving Oxford, he saw Petra with his own eyes. Whether it realized his poetic vision I know not, but for that vision he may have found ample warrant in books, for every traveller, I think, except Sir Henry Layard, has expatiated on the gorgeous tints of the "Red City." It does not follow, however, that Sir Henry's eyes played him false, or that his sense of colour, or his feeling for beauty was cold. Even in the shining Orient much depends upon atmospheric conditions, as much depends under our own bleak skies. From the Gulf of Suez I have seen the rising winter sun paint the grim ranges of Sinai with more colours than ever Turner mixed on his palette; and in the evening hours of an English summer I have seen the cool grey beauty of Magdalen Tower flushed with the light of Burgon's own rose-red dream.

Though Burgon's sense for style was undeniable, it was stronger perhaps in his appreciation than in his practice. In his own writings the proofs of it are somewhat intermittent. But his literary instinct was undoubtedly strong, and never more strongly shown than in his biographical sketches. Some of the Lives of his Twelve Good Men are indeed what the reviewer calls them, models of biography; not models in style, or arrangement, for they are tossed together from a variety of sources and sometimes in rather a haphazard manner; but the general

effect is singularly telling and vivid. He had in truth not a little of "the devouring eye and portraying hand" of Carlyle, an instinct for the salient points of a character or a scene which is not common at least among modern biographies. No one who has read it is likely soon to forget his description of a visit to Martin Routh, that wondrous old President of Magdalen who had seen Johnson in his brown wig scrambling up the steps of University, who had talked with a man who remembered Addison in the common-room of his college, and with a lady whose mother had seen Charles the Second sauntering with his dogs round the walk now known as "the Parks" and "dodging" the Heads of Houses who wished to share the royal leisure. What a picture it is! The room lined with books reaching on their white shelves from floor to ceiling, and huddled up by a blazing fire the little old man, bent almost double (he was in his ninety-first year) half hidden in a wig such as one only sees in old pictures, and clad in the orthodox costume for the Head of a House in the last century, cassock, gown, scarf and bands, shorts and buckles. And then his answer to his visitor's request for advice on his theological studies.

He inquired what I read? "Eusebius, Hooker, and Pearson, very carefully." He nodded. The gravity which by this time his features had assumed was very striking. He lay back in his chair. His head sank forward on his chest, and he looked like one absorbed in thought. "Yes,—I think, sir" (said he after a long pause which, besides raising my curiosity, rather alarmed me by the contrast it presented to his recent animated manner), "I think, sir, were I you, sir—that I would—first of all—read the—the Gospel according to St. Matthew." Here he paused. "And after I had read the Gospel according to St. Matthew—I would—were I you, sir—go on to read—the Gospel according to St. Mark." I looked at him anxiously to see whether he was serious. One glance was enough. He was giving me (but at a very slow rate) the outline of my future course. "I think, sir, when I had read the Gospel according to St. Mark, I would go on, sir,

—to the Gospel according to St. Luke, sir." Another pause, as if the reverend speaker were reconsidering the matter. "Well, sir, and when I had read those three Gospels, sir, were I in your place, I would go on—yes, I would certainly go on to read the Gospel according to St. John."

But I must not go on quoting; the whole scene is inimitable; the scorching fire, the shrill-voiced canary (to whom the works of theology were no care), the ancient sage distilling word by word the best advice that a life-long study of Divinity enabled him to give to one just beginning it,—to read the Gospels! Excellent counsel! who can doubt it? Excellent too that other: "'I think, sir, since you care for the advice of an old man, sir, you will find it a very good practice'—(here he looked me archly in the face)—'*always to verify your references*, sir.'" How vivid too is the picture of Charles Marriott, "the Man of Saintly Life," in his dusty, untidy rooms, overflowing with books, pamphlets, catalogues, finishing his sermon while the church-bell was going,—“leaning, sprawling rather, over his table, with his ink-bottle secured to his button-hole (like a tax-gatherer)”; or explaining some perplexing discrepancy in the Fathers, “all very lucid,—all very beautiful,—disjointed, but logically coherent—twitching his hand before his forehead, twitching and scratching, as if he were trying to catch a fly.” And this description of one of his breakfast-parties, the characteristic Oxford meal of those days.

An American Bishop, for example, attended by three of his clergy, having crossed the Atlantic, would present himself at Marriott's door,—who instantly asked them all four to breakfast next morning, and sent off cards by his servant to certain of his intimates, who found themselves invited to meet the strangers “to-morrow at 9 o'clock.” On his way from Hall or Chapel, or in the street, he would ask another, and another, and another, as he happened to encounter them. Unfortunately he kept no reckoning. The result may be imagined. On entering the dear man's rooms next morning, whereas breakfast had been laid for ten, fifteen guests

had assembled already. While we were secretly counting the tea-cups, another rap was heard, and in came two University Professors. All laughed; but it was no laughing matter, for still another and another person presented himself. The bell was again and again rung: more and more tea and coffee,—muffins and dry toast,—butter and bread,—cream and eggs,—chops and steaks,—were ordered; and “Richard” was begged to “spread my other table-cloth on my other table.” The consequence was that our host's violoncello,—fiddle-strings and music-books—printer's proofs and postage-stamps,—medicine-bottles and pill-boxes,—respirator and veil,—grey wrapper for his throat and green shade for his eyes,—pamphlets and letters innumerable,—all were discharged in a volley on to the huge sofa.

It is consoling to know that “Richard's” superhuman exertions were eventually successful, and that the American Bishop and his clergy were, as the narrator puts it, “greatly entertained in more senses than one”; and a “delightful absurdity” they no doubt found it,—for once. To those who remember Oxford about the middle of the 'Sixties this story of a breakfast-party will recall certain other breakfasts in which Burgon played a less sociable part,—those luxurious meals which he accused the young sybarites of Christ Church of smuggling into their rooms on Sunday mornings. Mr. Sandford, then Censor of the House, defended his flock bravely; but the controversy is probably best remembered now as inspiring Mr. Sydney Hall with a subject for one of those clever caricatures in which he has preserved the Oxford life of that generation with a humour and vivacity that his popular pencil has never since surpassed.

Humour and vivacity were qualities never likely to go unrecognized or unappreciated by Burgon. He was gifted with both in a peculiar degree; “His passionate zeal,” says the reviewer, “was relieved and enlivened by an exquisitely keen sense of the ludicrous.” He says well; and well too when he adds, “Though one of the most devout and reverent of men, he

was not afraid to let his sense of humour play over Scriptural incidents and phrases, or flash from the pulpit at St. Mary's." Few Oxford men of the last five and twenty years will need assurance of this side of Burgon's character. The flashes from the pulpit were rather startling sometimes, and occasionally, perhaps, found rather shocking by some good souls whose sense of the ludicrous was less keen or under better restraint. Historic Doubt has of course thrown its cold shadow over these as over all other popular beliefs; but the traditions of a University are plants of hardy growth, caring as little for the spud of the modern historian as Routh's canary cared for its master's Divinity. Several of Burgon's sallies are moreover beyond scepticism. More than one of my Oxford friends will recall, more accurately than I probably can, how in a certain college chapel the Vicar of St. Mary's (anticipating the warning of Sir James Crichton Browne) delivered his fiery soul on the subject of women's education, then beginning to foreshadow the dangerous follies of our own day: "And when you have perfected this monstrous anomaly of culture, there will not, I suppose, be left even one emasculated man to tell her what a fool she is." It was from his own pulpit that he is said to have concluded one of a series of sermons on John the Baptist with these words: "And now, my brethren, having accompanied John into the wilderness, we will leave him there till next Sunday." From the same place too were heard the words (recalling, if not suggested by, Lord Beaconsfield's famous vote for "the angels") in which he bid those be of good cheer who would not accept Mr. Darwin's theories of their origin: "Let them look for their ancestors in the Zoological Gardens, so long as they will permit us to find ours in the Garden of Eden." For the following instance there is perhaps less foundation. Expatiating once on the fact that in man alone

among the animals could a regular advance be traced, while the others remained now as they were on the first day of their creation, he bid his audience consider "the common ass"; then pausing, leaning forward over his pulpit, and gazing impressively round the expectant church, he added,—"My brothers, you will never see a more perfect ass than you see now."

But let no one who reads these fragments without any previous knowledge of their subject go away with the idea that Burgon was nothing but a fighter and a humourist. Let them rather turn to the reviewer (if they have not patience, or time, for the biographer) and learn from him what manner of man this really was. There they will learn how in truth this man whom the world only knew as "An extraordinarily bitter controversialist; at war with all mankind in turn; sarcastic, uncharitable, censorious; reckless in the imputation of motives, and dealing habitually in language which led so genial a critic as Dean Church to call him that 'dear old learned Professor of Billingsgate,'" was in truth among his own friends the most gentle and generous and loyal of men. Women and children delighted in him; to them he was always the most courteous of companions, the most kindly of play-fellows. They will learn too that he never gave the rein to his fighting spirit save when he conceived that he did well to be angry. "Like John Knox, he never feared the face of man. He did not care a jot if he made enemies in the most influential quarters. Wherever he saw [or thought he saw] disloyalty to faith or morals, he exposed and denounced it without the faintest regard to consequences." *Lenis minimeque pertinax*,—it is good counsel; but there are times and causes when it may be pushed too far. It were dangerous to hold up Burgon's example for general imitation; but in the hour of Gallio such spirits can never come amiss. Few at least will

refuse, to borrow the words of another
brave fighter,

A mass, or a prayer, now, good gentlemen,
For such a bold rider's soul.

II.

There is something at once both
pleasing and touching in Dr. Birkbeck
Hill's devotion to the memory of
Johnson. Himself a Pembroke man,
it is as though a deep sense of filial
piety had led him to consecrate his
days to the fame of the most celebrated
member of the little college nestling
under the lordly shadow of Christ
Church. Hero-worship is indeed com-
mon enough, but it is apt now to take
a different complexion from that
Carlyle recommended. We mostly pre-
fer our heroes fresh and fresh, as we
prefer our eggs. The dead men were very
fine fellows in their way, no doubt,
and are still occasionally found useful
to write about. But your flesh and
blood is the only wear for true heroes.
Why concern ourselves with specula-
tions on the sheeted phantoms of the
past, when we have the fine ripe
realities of the present to our hands?
Dr. Hill's worship is of the old sort,
robust and thorough. His devotion
resembles that of the lover who asked,

Oh ! what was love made for, if 'tis not the
same
Through joy and through torment, through
glory or shame ?

He is a proselytizer too, as well as a
worshipper. Boswell boasted that he
had "Johnsonized the land"; Dr.
Hill would re-Johnsonize it. Perhaps
his loyal endeavours,

To cut Wales, and bring the old King
into fashion,

may not prove so successful as he
would wish. For in good sooth John-
son's place was settled before Dr.
Hill's day, "like the Monument," as
the old man said when asked how he
felt after the failure of *Irene*. Ma-
caulay's words are as true now as

when they were written nearly forty
years ago.

Since his death the popularity of his
works,—the *Lives of the Poets*, and, perhaps,
The Vanity of Human Wishes excepted—
has greatly diminished. His Dictionary
has been altered by editors till it can
scarcely be called his. An allusion to his
Rambler or his *Idler* is not readily appre-
hended in literary circles. The fame even
of *Rasselas* has grown somewhat dim.
But though the celebrity of the writings
may have declined, the celebrity of the
writer, strange to say, is as great as ever.
Boswell's book has done for him more
than the best of his own books could do.
The memory of other authors is kept alive
by their works. But the memory of John-
son keeps many of his works alive. The
old philosopher is still among us in the
brown coat with the metal buttons, and the
shirt which ought to be at wash, blinking,
puffing, rolling his head, drumming with
his fingers, tearing his meat like a tiger,
and swallowing his tea in oceans. No
human being who has been more than
seventy years in the grave is so well known
to us. And it is but just to say that our
intimate acquaintance with what he would
himself have called the anfractuosities of
his intellect and his temper serves only to
strengthen our conviction that he was both
a great and good man.

Not many of us, perhaps, besides
Dr. Hill, read Johnson now; but we
have all a kindly feeling for him.
There can be little doubt that he is more
popular now than he was in his life.
Of all dead men, with the exception of
Sir Walter, he is probably the best
known and the best liked. But there
must have been many of his con-
temporaries who liked him little.
This is how Horace Walpole wrote of
him.

Withalumber of learning and some strong
parts, Johnson was an odious and mean
character. By principle a Jacobite, arro-
gant, self-sufficient and over-bearing by
nature, ungrateful through pride and of
feminine bigotry, he had prostituted his
pen to party even in a dictionary, and had
afterwards for a pension contradicted his
own definitions. His manners were sordid,
supercilious and brutal; his style ridicu-
lously bombastic and vicious; and in one
word, with all the pedantry he had all the
gigantic littleness of a schoolmaster.

It is needless to add that this indictment was not published till many years after Walpole's own death. No one pays any heed to it now, though everybody who has read Boswell's book carefully will recognize a grain or two of truth in the monstrous heap. Yet we cannot doubt that there were many "of the great lords and ladies who did not love to have their mouths stopped," who would, with a due regard to their own safety, have gladly subscribed to Walpole's libel while the object of it was still blinking, and rolling, and puffing upon earth. The truth, of course, is that we are no longer afraid of him; he cannot descend on us, "like a hammer on the red son of the furnace." And even his most intimate friends, those who loved and revered him most truly,—Burke and Reynolds, Langton and Beauclerk,—must have felt a little nervous in his presence. No man of whom any record has survived, not even Carlyle, ever dared to be so brutally insolent as Johnson. And it was impossible to guess when, or at what, the slumbering volcano would not burst forth. He loved those whom he chastened, no doubt; but his chastening was apt to be heavy. Our state is happier. The famous "Sir, you are a fool!" passes harmlessly over our heads; muzzle or butt, the pistol has no terror for us; our withers are unwrung. We can afford to treat him as he bid his friends treat the memory of Goldsmith: "Let not his frailties be remembered; he was a very great man."

To this great man Dr. Hill is labouring a great monument. It must already have reached a round dozen of volumes, and he promises us an edition of *The Lives of the Poets* which, edited after his liberal fashion, will materially add to their number. His last instalment consists of two volumes of Johnson's letters, or rather partly of his letters, and partly of a catalogue of his letters. The table of contents shows 1045 in all, of which 341 (so near as I can make out) are only

catalogued; of the rest, 76 are now published for the first time; the balance of 628 (supposing my calculations to be correct) is reprinted from Mrs. Piozzi's collection and other less familiar sources. Johnson cannot take rank among the great letter-writers, among the Walpoles and Grays, the Cowpers and Byrons, the Lambs and Carlyles. His letters are full of good sense of course; and of course many instances of his apt, if somewhat ponderous, felicity of phrase can be found in them. But they do not impress one as the work (to borrow what has been said of Sainte-Beuve's criticisms) "of a man discharging with delight the very office for which he was born"; and this is the mark of all good letters, if not of all good literature. Except to Mrs. Thrale, Johnson's correspondence seems to have been little more than a duty, not always ungrudgingly performed; and in the letters to Mrs. Thrale the "solemn yet pleasing humour," which occasionally sheds a chastened light over the pages of *The Rambler* and *The Idler*, moves rather heavily. He said himself that he put as little as he could in his letters from the fear that they would one day be published. But, "Sir, the man who writes except for money is a fool"; perhaps this was really at the bottom of it. The iron of Grub Street had entered too deep into the old man's soul to leave him free to appreciate the uncovenanted delights of a correspondence. The new letters discovered by Dr. Hill's sleepless energy do not strike me as of any particular importance; but indeed many included in these two volumes are so extremely trivial, and some so extremely dull, that I confess to have made my way rather painfully through the collection. "Mr. Johnson desires Mr. Nicol to send him a set of the last lives, and would be glad to know how the octavo edition goes forward." It is difficult to grow enthusiastic over this sort of thing, and there is not a little of it in these volumes. One has received the

honour of a facsimile,—'twas a desperate hand the Doctor wrote! Dr. Hill calls it "the gem of his collection"; I suppose because it is the only one that has been discovered from Johnson to his wife. It refers to a bad leg from which "dearest Tetty" was suffering, and which she is exhorted to get cured so soon as may be, which somehow suggests Mr. Winkle's advice to Mr. Pickwick when that good gentleman found himself in the pond. It is not otherwise remarkable, except for the phrase "my dear girl," which has a half pathetic comicality about it coming from a husband of thirty to a wife on the brink of her fifty-first year.

Whatever be the importance of this collection the spirit which has inspired it is beyond all praise. Perhaps if Dr. Hill could have exercised a little more restraint in his fondness for notes, the value of this, as of his previous publications, would not have been lessened. He evidently does not share his idol's sentiments: "Notes are often necessary, but they are necessary evils." Sometimes he is rather inclined to make them unnecessary evils. It seems a pity too that he has exerted himself so sedulously to pare away all the "nodosities and anfractuosities" of the great man. Are they not part and parcel not only of the man, but of the man's greatness? Does it not prove not only the essential vigour of his intellect, but also the essential goodness of his nature, that with all these disqualifications he yet rose to the position he held in perhaps the brightest, the wittiest, and, in the true sense of the word, the best society that books have preserved for us? The contortions of the Sibyl, to borrow Burke's felicitous phrase, add fresh point to the inspiration. To labour to show that Johnson and his surroundings were cast in the common pattern is not the way to re-Johnsonize the land, but rather to un-Johnsonize it. Yet Dr. Hill seems to wish to represent his idol as others are, only cleverer and

better; and, perhaps as a natural consequence, he is apt to grow very indignant with everybody (except Boswell) who stands in the way of this mistaken endeavour. There is a singular instance of this in the preface to these volumes. Commenting on the letter to "Dearest Tetty" he has this extraordinary passage.

Well! she was twenty years older than Johnson, and no doubt deserved some of the ridicule which Lord Macaulay has so lavishly cast upon her. Nevertheless at the time of the marriage she was of just the same age as was Barbara, Duchess of Cleveland, when our great historian describes her as "no longer young, but still retaining some traces of that superb and voluptuous loveliness which twenty years before overcame the hearts of all men." For all we know it was Mrs. Johnson's "superb and voluptuous loveliness which overcame the heart" of the lamented Mr. Porter, the Birmingham mercer, and it was the traces of it which overcame young Samuel Johnson. She was only a decent married woman; had she been a royal harlot, Macaulay, instead of mocking her "ceruse bloom," might himself have laid on the colours with an ardour and skill scarcely surpassed by Sir Peter Lely.

It is a pity that somebody at the Clarendon Press could not have saved Dr. Hill from this unfortunate exhibition, which can only suggest to those who do not know him that he is equally ignorant of Macaulay's writings and of Boswell's. Macaulay admired Johnson quite as sincerely, if not quite so exuberantly, as Dr. Hill, and understood him, if one may so, quite as well. He has lavished no ridicule on Mrs. Johnson, nor ever doubted her husband's devotion to her, on which indeed he has written very justly and tenderly. In reviewing Boswell's book he has described Tetty as she is there described by people who had known her both in Birmingham, Lichfield, and London; and, with all his industry and research, Dr. Hill will hardly claim to be a better judge at least of the personal appearance of a woman who died one hundred and forty years ago than men who had seen her and

spoken with her. To talk of Macaulay's being willing to flatter a woman because she was a King's mistress is as ridiculous as it would be to talk of Dr. Hill's being willing to abuse Macaulay because his two essays have contributed more to the general knowledge of Johnson than all Dr. Hill's agreeable volumes. Apart from the astounding confusion of the argument, scarcely credible in a member of the University which has always been regarded as the particular training-ground of the reasoning faculties, to suggest that "for all we know" Elizabeth Porter was as beautiful a woman as Barbara Palmer is as idle as it would be to suggest that young Samuel Johnson may "for all we know" have been as comely as Windham and as courteous as Langton, and only proves to what depths a clever man can descend when he allows himself to confound his antipathies with his duties. Mrs. Johnson's appearance, manners, and temper are in truth little less familiar to us

than are those of her illustrious husband. Indeed the whole passage might be described in the words Dr. Hill has permitted himself to use elsewhere of the same great writer (who has indeed had the misfortune to differ from him on more than one point) as "an unjust and insulting attack." But it would perhaps be better described in the words with which Johnson rebuked one of his friends for a silly question, "Tush, Sir, you speak childishly." Let us hope that when the time for a new edition comes Dr. Hill will cancel this passage. He will remember who said: "When I was beginning the world and was nothing and nobody, the joy of my life was to fire at all the established wits." That is a joy one may pardon in a brisk lad penning his first paragraph for the newspapers. It does not become a gentleman who has long risen beyond these delusive amusements, and who is moreover, as all his friends can testify, naturally inclined to be unjust and insulting to no man.

THE STRANGER IN THE HOUSE.

THE present Parliament is dragging slowly towards its end, and it must frankly be admitted that everybody engaged in carrying on its business has the appearance of being thoroughly tired of it. My fellow strangers still flock into the galleries, not knowing what is in store for them, but vaguely expecting something wonderful to happen. This is the time of year when the country constituent begins to make his appearance on the scene, and his idea is that he can get admission to the gallery at any moment, and take his "missus" in with him. In vain does his Member explain that orders have to be applied for in advance, and that the few places in the Ladies' Gallery are balloted for a week beforehand. The voter from the provinces does not understand or believe this. There is the House straight before him, and there stands his "missus," fully alive to the fact that her husband's vote is a thing worth having, and that the day is coming when it will be most humbly sought for by both sides. The Member offers to take her round the House and to the inner lobby, where Members and newspaper correspondents are to be seen. Beyond the stern janitors who guard the entrance, and close to the door of the House itself, is a queer little bench upon which a couple of ladies may stand, and there look straight forward at the Speaker himself, with the great men, or the little men in great positions, ranged on either side of him. It is better to give the constituent's wife this furtive peep into the Chamber than let her go away having seen nothing but the outer lobby. But I have known good votes lost through sheer inability on the part of the harassed Members to get any more orders that day; for people who are disappointed will sometimes strike out without much regard for fair play,

and a man's wife has great influence with him in these matters. He has brought her to London to enjoy herself, and his Member pretended that he could not get her into the House of Commons, although everybody knows that a gallery is set apart for the special use of ladies. This is a grievance of the kind which no political services can atone for. And that is why the ordinary Member dreads the return of the season when cheap excursions to London set in from all parts of the country, and he cannot go out into the lobby without finding half-a-dozen of his dear friends and supporters waiting for him. The great leaders can sometimes get a young colleague to manage this part of the business for them, although I have seen Mr. Gladstone stand bareheaded in the corridor of the outer lobby, waiting upon a Midlothian constituent with a pass to the gallery.

Strangers do not mind a dull evening in the House, for at any rate they can feast their eyes on men whom the newspapers have made famous. They are all easily recognised, thanks to the multiplication of photographs. It would be impossible for a visitor from the most remote of colonial wilds to mistake Mr. Gladstone for anybody else, and the identity of Sir William Harcourt is never likely to give rise to much dispute. Mr. John Morley is not so generally known, and the other occupants of the front Opposition bench do not appear to be objects of much interest in the eyes of the casual stranger. The little knot of Liberal Unionists who were accustomed to sit in one corner, greatly to the disgust of their former colleagues, have lost one-third of their number by the removal of Lord Hartington to the House of Lords. Mr. Chamberlain

and Sir Henry James still remain, but strangers very seldom ask to have them pointed out. They want to see Mr. Balfour, because they have heard so much about him; and they look with a certain degree of interest on Mr. Matthews, who has the power of saving men and women condemned to death, or of letting them go to their doom—a power which no Minister would desire to have placed in his hands if he could possibly help himself. When some really doubtful case arises, in which the great body of the public take an active interest, and the newspapers are clamouring loudly for or against a commutation of the sentence, Mr. Matthews must have some very anxious and unpleasant moments. Perhaps the judge who tried the case is wavering, and the Home Secretary goes all over the facts with him, and considers any new circumstances which have come to the knowledge of the Crown after sentence was pronounced. Or it may be that the pressure from outside, as in the instance of Mrs. Maybrick, is so great that it is scarcely possible to resist it. As a rule, however, Mr. Matthews has stood out firmly for the principle that in the absence of new facts which would have affected the decision of the jury had they been made known on the trial, the Home Secretary has no right to interfere with the course of the law. For adhering to this rule he has been very much abused from time to time, but when the excitement has passed away it has generally been acknowledged that he was right. In the Lipski case, press and public alike demanded the release of the convict, and one paper proved conclusively that Lipski must have been innocent because he was not near the scene of the murder when it was committed. Mr. Matthews came to a different conclusion, and had no doubt of the man's guilt. Yet it was perhaps a relief to his mind when a full confession of every detail of the crime was brought to him from the hands of Lipski himself. He was told, as he

has been told since, that he committed a "judicial murder," but a Home Secretary in these days must be prepared for such compliments. In many respects, it is the least desirable post in the Ministry, but it carries with it a great deal of influence and power, and I do not think it can fairly be said that Mr. Matthews has ever abused either. He has stood his ground right well against storms which would have driven weaker mortals from the field. The Irish never cease to remind him that he was once a Home Ruler, almost a Fenian, and the bigoted take care that it shall not be forgotten that he is a Roman Catholic. He has a curious way of holding up two fingers when he is addressing the House, after the manner of a Catholic Prelate blessing the congregation. Perhaps he is not aware of that; many persons are quite unconscious of their mannerisms. Mr. Gladstone, for example, probably does not know that he is in the habit of scratching the top of his head with his thumb-nail. There is a well-known Member who takes himself into custody by a firm grip on his collar whenever he rises to speak, and another finds relief from his nervousness by buttoning and unbuttoning his waistcoat. A third will begin a speech at one end of a bench and finish it at the other end, not having the slightest idea that he has moved an inch. The British "er, er," pronounced in a sonorous tone by way of filling up gaps, is heard in its greatest perfection from Sir William Harcourt. Until he gets well started and warmed up, his speech consists mainly of "er, er." Mr. John Morley has a trick of doubling himself nearly in two, and then starting back as if a spring were suddenly touched. Mr. Balfour anchors himself fast to the box on the table, that box which has so often been pounded by great men, and into which I was once curious enough to look, expecting to find objects of great rarity and interest. It contained nothing more

wonderful than copies of the oath and the Testament on which new members are sworn.

What we as listeners up aloft like most is a man who says what he has to say in a plain and straightforward manner, and then sits down. The honest truth is that there are very few such men in the House. It is not everybody, even in the foremost rank, who knows when his argument is really concluded, and when he ought to make an end of it. A private Member will sometimes make a great success for himself by seizing precisely the right moment to sit down. The consequence is that the House is sure to listen to him the next time he rises to speak. But the official or the ex-official does not care. He must be heard, and he rarely scruples to take advantage of his position. Certain members of the privileged class are great offenders in this respect. The House of Commons is a body brought together chiefly for the purpose of listening to them. But the tide of Democracy is always advancing, for good or evil, and the rank and file of both parties, especially of the Radicals, are no respecters of persons. They are not to be frightened with a name. When Mr. Gladstone himself is interrupted by murmurs from behind, and his authority is set at naught, what can humbler mortals expect? Does a man happen to catch the humour of the moment, and fall in with the mood of his audience? If so, he will be listened to. If he is not so lucky, he will be as coldly received and as sharply criticised as if he were a bumptious new Member. There is no reverence for anybody in these days. The Conservatives, as I have before been obliged to remark, show more fidelity and generosity towards their leaders than the Radicals, but the spirit of loyalty is not what it used to be. The divinity that doth hedge a king is all gone. Sir Robert Peel, stalking through the lobbies without condescending to exchange a word with any of his followers, would

in these days find himself attacked right and left, and his party would be very likely to take the first opportunity of leaving him in a minority. The thing for a leader to do now is to make himself universally agreeable. He must put on no "airs." Tom, Dick, and Harry must be free to go up and speak to him. It may cost him an effort to reply in the proper manner to them all; but to snub them would be a far more costly operation in the end. Robust health, a capacity for enduring great fatigue, and attractive social qualities, these are the endowments with which the ambitious politician ought to start when he enters Parliament. He may have as many more as nature or art has conferred upon him, but without these he cannot go far.

It is very different in the House of Lords, to which I sometimes get admission, and which in its way presents quite as interesting a subject for study as what is facetiously called the Lower House. There the men of activity are quite out of their element. There is scarcely ever any business going on which an outsider can comprehend. A Bill is whisked through Committee within five minutes of its title being read. Nothing but a debate of unusual importance, which in favourable years takes place once or twice during a session, will induce "My Lords" to remain when the hands of the clock point to the approach of the dinner-hour. They get up to speak when they like, they introduce any subject they please, there is no one to call them to order if they drag in ever so many irrelevant topics, and if two noble lords rise together, the House has to determine, by a vote if necessary, which shall be heard. For the Lord Chancellor, who seems to be acting as chairman, is in reality a mere dummy; a figure-head, whose presence is necessary for the transaction of business, except when the House is in Committee, but who has no power to keep order, and no control over the august personages who

surround him. He cannot "name" an unruly peer, and if he presumed to check discussion he would extinguish no one but himself. There are such persons as unruly peers, ancient men who insist on coming forward when the Prime Minister has risen to speak, and who will not sit down until some one has solemnly moved that they "be not heard." After that they keep on beginning a speech which is never destined to be finished, until the doorkeepers inform them that the "House has risen." Then they float away in a ghostly sort of manner, sometimes to the Peers' Gallery in the House of Commons, where they doze out the remainder of the interval before dinner. Except on important occasions, it is to an audience of half-a-dozen of these curiosities of the peerage that a member of the House of Lords has to address himself when he wishes to make a speech. He need not "ballot for a place," it is true, for there is nothing to prevent him discussing Shakespeare and the musical glasses, or any other subject that strikes his fancy, whenever the House is open. In that respect he has a great advantage over members of the other House. But it is not easy to deliver a speech to rows of empty benches. Even when a set debate is going on, and an audience of moderate dimensions has assembled, the atmosphere of the House is depressing. A faint murmur is the nearest approach to applause that is ever heard there. A noble lord of a humorous turn perhaps detects an opportunity for treating some question in a light and pleasant vein. Before he has got far on his road an icy chill creeps into his blood. Just below him or in front of him is the Prime Minister, drumming upon his knees with his fingers, evidently waiting impatiently for the farce to come to an end. A little further on there are some bishops in full panoply, and few men have the hardihood to make jokes in the presence of half-a-dozen bishops. Several distinguished persons are asleep, and others get up

and walk out in the midst of the speaker's best points. Presently Lord Salisbury rises to reply, slowly and unwillingly. He utters a few sharp sarcasms in a hard voice, disposes briefly of some reflections which have been made on his policy, declines altogether to go into the general question, and crumples up his ambitious critic with a remorseless hand. Every sentence goes home like a bullet. In a few minutes the debate is over, and the noble lord who originated it resolves as he goes homewards that he will try the experiment no more. The younger men who have anything in them are apt to lament their hard fate in that they are compelled to belong to the Upper House at all. Lord Rosebery, although he has no great cause to complain of his position, makes no secret of his regret that the House of Commons cannot be the scene of his exertions. It is a good thing no doubt for a public man to begin his career there, as Lord Beaconsfield, Lord Salisbury, the Duke of Devonshire, and so many others have done. They have the chance of making a reputation which may at least be preserved when they are summoned to the Lords. Sometimes it may even be increased. More frequently it comes to an end and is speedily forgotten. The last we see or hear of once prominent men is their elevation to the peerage. It was so in the case of Mr. Robert Lowe, who sank completely below the horizon long before his eyesight failed him. He may still be seen now and then in one of the side galleries, like Lord Tennyson's Tithonus, "a white-hair'd shadow roaming like a dream." When Benjamin Disraeli was transformed into the Earl of Beaconsfield his health was already failing, and he had no desire to create a new reputation for himself in the Upper House. He was Prime Minister, and he confined himself to the official replies which were required by the business of the day. The old flames burst out again at long intervals, but there was no one in front of him who

had the power to disperse the lethargy which seemed gradually to close in upon him. Lord Granville could be pungent at times, but "Dizzy" regarded him with patient tolerance, and never answered him in a spirit of acerbity. When the Conservatives were defeated in 1880 their leader practically received his death-blow. He felt confident that the measure of his days would not permit him to see the return of his party to office. Gradually his power departed from him, and his mantle fell upon Lord Salisbury, who was not always an admirer of the "Asian mystery."

The House of Lords never fills up for the sake of hearing any one speak, unless the programme is announced beforehand. There is no "floating audience" in the libraries or the lobbies. In the House of Commons it frequently happens that there are not a score of Members visible, but let the division bells ring and some three or four hundreds will speedily make their appearance. They will also flock in to listen to some important speech, whereas in the Lords there are no relays of idlers who can be brought upon the field of action. The House, however, is never likely to be empty when it is known that Lord Salisbury or the Duke of Argyll intends to speak. The Prime Minister is, of course, sure to command attention by virtue of what he has to say, but apart even from that he would always be what theatrical people call a "draw." Not that he is an orator, any more than his nephew Mr. Balfour is one. His manner is monotonous, his voice harsh, his general bearing not by any means captivating. But before he has uttered half-a-dozen sentences one recognises the fact that here is a man who speaks from full knowledge or reflection, and who goes straight to the very heart of the matter which he is discussing. What Mr. Disraeli meant when he said that Lord Salisbury's gibes "lacked finish" I have never been able to conjecture. Finish, the highest literary finish, is stamped upon almost everything Lord

Salisbury says. You could scarcely transpose a word, much less strike one out, without doing him an injury. There is no one in either House to equal him in this respect, for Mr. Gladstone is undeniably verbose at times, and his sentences often get into a tangle which no man but himself could unravel. Lord Salisbury never wanders, never introduces parenthetical remarks, never heaps up words unnecessarily. If he is attacking he strikes home. Sometimes he is very incautious, but he is merely expressing his opinions without diplomatic reserve. He is not talking at random. He is a Tory, obliged at the present moment to carry on a good deal of Radical legislation for the sake of holding the Unionist party together. That this *rôle* is altogether to his mind may be doubted. Now and again his real sentiments will force themselves into notice, and then there is consternation among many of his followers. The allusions to "black men" and to "Hottentots" were not wise, but even a Prime Minister is not always proof against the temptation to say what he really thinks. One thing is certain, Lord Salisbury is by far the ablest man the Tories have got in their ranks, and one of the ablest to be found to-day in the public life of any country. That he is popular with the "masses" is not very likely, for he has never gone in and out among them in the way that Mr. Gladstone has done. And he certainly cannot be accused of having sought to gain popularity by any unworthy artifices.

But to return to the place in which I am more at home, in my casual fashion. What has been going on there? For some time, parties on both sides the House were content with marking time. Mr. Balfour has made himself familiar with his duties and is now very rarely to be caught at a disadvantage. The Tories generally have mustered in sufficient numbers, but I see great gaps in the Gladstonian ranks, and the Irish members show a great disinclination to take part in active

business. Mr. Dillon and Mr. William O'Brien stow themselves away, as I am informed, under the gallery, where they are not visible to strangers. The whole business in which they once took so great a pleasure has become hateful to them. Perhaps they did not love Mr. Parnell, but they have found out how difficult it is to get on without him. One of the ablest of the band, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, is now rarely seen in the House, there being no longer a rallying point round which all these sharpshooters and skirmishers can assemble. Mr. T. P. O'Connor must be ranked among the most effective speakers of his party, and the House always listens to him with interest, but he is "not i' the vein" just now, and the mere drudgery of Parliament evidently has not the same attraction for him which it appears to have for Mr. Sexton. Those who claim to be the true political heirs of Mr. Parnell, led by Mr. John Redmond, are standing quietly aside waiting for an opportunity to try their strength against Mr. Gladstone. But at present the old campaigner is too much for them; he contrived to spike poor Mr. Blane's gun without allowing his hand to be seen. His position may have its weak points, but it will require a more formidable antagonist than Mr. Blane to rout him out of it. The great difficulty is to keep the English and Welsh Radicals in proper subjection. The Welsh are a particularly awkward team to handle just now, for

they have been reinforced during the last few years by a little knot of industrious and clever young men who have completely driven Mr. Dillwyn and the older leaders into the back-ground. Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. S. Evans, and Mr. T. Ellis, have more than once shown that they decline to make any compromise with their principles even upon the advice of Mr. Gladstone. They are Irreconcilables, demanding the first place for Wales, even upon the question of Home Rule. Mr. Labouchere himself cannot bring this skittish contingent into regular line. In fact Mr. Labouchere, since he has been nominated for office by so many of his party organs, has adopted a dignified attitude, and rarely condescends to appear as the "chartered libertine" of Radicalism. That part has been taken up with much vigour by Mr. Cuninghame Graham, who intends to show his predecessor and rival a variety of new tricks before the Session is over. To sum up in the face of Mr. Speaker and the House his opinion of the "whole concern," in the terse language once used by the Duke of Wellington, and on a subsequent occasion to go and sit in Mr. Gladstone's place with his feet elevated upon the table, was to advance a good deal beyond any point hitherto reached by Mr. Labouchere. The strangers in the gallery may reasonably look to Mr. Graham for a good deal of solid entertainment from time to time.

MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

JULY, 1892.

DON ORSINO.¹

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD.

CHAPTER XV.

THERE was nothing in the note burnt by Orsino which he might not have shown to his mother, since he had already told her the name of the writer. It contained the simple statement that Maria Consuelo was about to leave Rome, and expressed the hope that she might see Orsino before her departure, as she had a small request to make of him in the nature of a commission. She hoped he would forgive her for putting him to so much inconvenience.

Though he betrayed no emotion in reading the few lines, he was in reality annoyed by them, and he wished that he might be prevented from obeying the summons. Maria Consuelo had virtually dropped the acquaintance, and had refused repeatedly and in a marked way to receive him. And now, at the last moment, when she needed something of him, she chose to recall him by a direct invitation. There was nothing to be done but to yield; and it was characteristic of Orsino that, having submitted to necessity, he did not put off the inevitable moment, but went to her at once.

The days were longer now than they had been during the time when he had visited her every day, and the lamp was not yet on the table when Orsino entered the small sitting-room.

Maria Consuelo was standing by the window looking out into the street, and her right hand rested against the pane while her fingers tapped it softly but impatiently. She turned quickly as he entered, but the light was behind her and he could hardly see her face. She came towards him and held out her hand.

"It is very kind of you to have come so soon," she said, as she took her old accustomed place by the table.

Nothing was changed, excepting that the two or three new books at her elbow were not the same ones which had been there two months earlier. In one of them was thrust the silver paper-cutter with the jewelled handle, which Orsino had never missed. He wondered whether there were any reason for the unvarying sameness of these details.

"Of course I came," he said. "And as there was time to-day, I came at once."

He spoke rather coldly, still resenting her former behaviour and expecting that she would immediately say what she wanted of him. He would promise to execute the commission, whatever it might be, and after ten minutes of conversation he would take his leave. There was a short pause, during which he looked at her. She did not seem well. Her face was pale and her eyes were deep with shadows.

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Even her auburn hair had lost something of its gloss. Yet she did not look older than before, a fact which proved her to be even younger than Orsino had imagined. Saving the look of fatigue and suffering in her face, Maria Consuelo had changed less than Orsino during the winter, and she realised the fact at a glance. A determined purpose, hard work, the constant exertion of energy and will, and possibly, too, the giving up to a great extent of gambling and strong drinks, had told in Orsino's face and manner as a course of training tells upon a lazy athlete. The bold black eyes had a more quiet glance, the well-marked features had acquired strength and repose, the lean jaw was firmer and seemed more square. Even physically Orsino had improved, though the change was undefinable. Young as he was, something of the power of mature manhood was already coming over his youth.

"You must have thought me very—rude," said Maria Consuelo, breaking the silence and speaking with a slight hesitation which Orsino had never noticed before.

"It is not for me to complain, madam," he answered. "You had every right——"

He stopped short, for he was reluctant to admit that she had been justified in her behaviour towards him.

"Thanks," she said, with an attempt to laugh. "It is pleasant to find magnanimous people now and then. I do not want you to think that I was capricious. That is all."

"I certainly do not think that. You were most consistent. I called three times and always got the same answer."

He fancied that he heard her sigh, but she tried to laugh again.

"I am not imaginative," she answered. "I dare say you found that out long ago. You have much more imagination than I."

"It is possible, madam, but you have not cared to develop it."

"What do you mean?"

"What does it matter? Do you remember what you said when I bade you good-night at the window of your carriage after Del Ferice's dinner? You said that you were not angry with me. I was foolish enough to imagine that you were in earnest. I came again and again, but you would not see me. You did not encourage my illusion."

"Because I would not receive you? How do you know what happened to me? How can you judge of my life? By your own? There is a vast difference."

"Yes, indeed!" exclaimed Orsino almost impatiently. "I know what you are going to say. It will be flattering to me of course. The unattached young man is dangerous to the reputation. The foreign lady is travelling alone. There is the foundation of a *vaudeville* in that!"

"If you must be unjust, at least do not be brutal," said Maria Consuelo in a low voice, and she turned her face away from him.

"I am evidently placed in the world to offend you, madam. Will you believe that I am sorry for it, though I only dimly comprehend my fault? What did I say? That you were wise in breaking off my visits, because you are alone here, and because I am young, unmarried, and unfortunately a little conspicuous in my native city. Is it brutal to suggest that a young and beautiful woman has a right not to be compromised? Can we not talk freely for half an hour as we used to talk, and then say good-bye and part good friends until you come to Rome again?"

"I wish we could!" There was an accent of sincerity in the tone which pleased Orsino.

"Then begin by forgiving me all my sins, and put them down to ignorance, want of tact, the inexperience of youth, or a naturally weak understanding. But do not call me brutal on such slight provocation."

"We shall never agree for a long

time," answered Maria Consuelo thoughtfully.

"Why not?"

"Because, as I told you, there is too great a difference between our lives. Do not answer me as you did before, for I am right. I began by admitting that I was rude. If that is not enough I will say more, I will even ask you to forgive me; can I do more?"

She spoke so earnestly that Orsino was surprised and almost touched. Her manner now was even less comprehensible than her repeated refusals to see him had been.

"You have done far too much already," he said gravely. "It is mine to ask your forgiveness for much that I have done and said. I only wish that I understood you better."

"I am glad you do not," replied Maria Consuelo, with a sigh which this time was not to be mistaken. "There is a sadness which it is better not to understand," she added softly.

"Unless one can help to drive it away." He too spoke gently, his voice being attracted to the pitch and tone of hers.

"You cannot do that; and if you could, you would not."

"Who can tell?"

The charm which he had formerly felt so keenly in her presence, but which he had of late so completely forgotten, was beginning to return and he submitted to it with a sense of satisfaction which he had not anticipated. Though the twilight was coming on, his eyes had become accustomed to the dimness in the room and he saw every change in her pale, expressive face. She leaned back in her chair with eyes half closed.

"I like to think that you would, if you knew how," she said presently.

"Do you not know that I would?"

She glanced quickly at him, and then, instead of answering, rose from her seat and called to her maid through one of the doors, telling her to bring the lamp. She sat down again, but being conscious that they were liable

to interruption, neither of the two spoke. Maria Consuelo's fingers played with the silver knife, drawing it out of the book in which it lay and pushing it back again. At last she took it up and looked closely at the jewelled monogram on the handle.

The maid entered, set the shaded lamp upon the table and glanced sharply at Orsino. He could not help noticing the look. In a moment she was gone, and the door closed behind her. Maria Consuelo looked over her shoulder to see that it had not been left ajar.

"She is a very extraordinary person, that elderly maid of mine," she said.

"So I should imagine from her face."

"Yes. She looked at you as she passed and I saw that you noticed it. She is my protector. I never have travelled without her, and she watches over me as a cat watches a mouse."

The little laugh that accompanied the words was not one of satisfaction, and the shade of annoyance did not escape Orsino.

"I suppose she is one of those people to whose ways one submits because one cannot live without them," he observed.

"Yes. That is it,—that is exactly it," repeated Maria Consuelo. "And she is very strongly attached to me," she added after an instant's hesitation. "I do not think she will ever leave me. In fact we are attached to each other."

She laughed again as though amused by her own way of stating the relation, and drew the paper-cutter through her hand two or three times. Orsino's eyes were oddly fascinated by the flash of the jewels.

"I would like to know the history of that knife," he said, almost thoughtlessly.

Maria Consuelo started and looked at him, paler even than before. The question seemed to be a very unexpected one.

"Why?" she asked quickly.

"I always see it on the table or in

your hand," answered Orsino. "It is associated with you; I think of it when I think of you. I always fancy that it has a story."

"You are right. It was given to me by a person who loved me."

"I see,—I was indiscreet."

"No—you do not see, my friend. If you did you,—you would understand many things, and perhaps it is better that you should not know them."

"Your sadness? Should I understand that, too?"

"No. Not that."

A slight colour rose in her face, and she stretched out her hand to arrange the shade of the lamp, with a gesture long familiar to him.

"We shall end by misunderstanding each other," she continued in a harder tone. "Perhaps it will be my fault. I wish you knew much more about me than you do, but without the necessity of telling you the story. But that is impossible. This paper-cutter, for instance, could tell the tale better than I, for it made people see things which I did not see."

"After it was yours?"

"Yes. After it was mine."

"It pleases you to be very mysterious," said Orsino with a smile.

"Oh, no! It does not please me at all," she answered, turning her face away again. "And least of all with you, my friend."

"Why least with me?"

"Because you are the first to misunderstand. You cannot help it. I do not blame you."

"If you would let me be your friend, as you call me, it would be better for us both."

He spoke as he had assuredly not meant to speak when he had entered the room, and with a feeling that surprised himself far more than his hearer. Maria Consuelo turned sharply upon him.

"Have you acted like a friend towards me?" she asked.

"I have tried to," he answered, with more presence of mind than truth.

Her tawny eyes suddenly lightened.

"That is not true. Be truthful! How have you acted? How have you spoken with me? Are you ashamed to answer?"

Orsino raised his head rather haughtily, and met her glance, wondering whether any man had ever been forced into such a strange position before. But though her eyes were bright, their look was neither cold nor defiant.

"You know the answer," he said.

"I spoke and acted as though I loved you, madam, but since you dismissed me so very summarily, I do not see why you wish me to say so."

"And you, Don Orsino, have you ever been loved,—loved in earnest—by any woman?"

"That is a very strange question, madam."

"I am discreet. You may answer it safely."

"I have no doubt of that."

"But you will not? No—that is your right. But it would be kind of you,—I should be grateful if you would tell me—has any woman ever loved you dearly?"

Orsino laughed, almost in spite of himself. He had little false pride.

"It is humiliating, madam. But since you ask the question and require a categorical answer, I will make my confession. I have never been loved. But you will observe, as an extenuating circumstance, that I am young. I do not give up all hope."

"No—you need not," said Maria Consuelo in a low voice, and again she moved the shade of the lamp.

Though Orsino was by no means fatuous, he must have been blind if he had not seen by this time that Madame d'Aranjuez was doing her best to make him speak as he had formerly spoken to her, and to force him into a declaration of love. He saw it, indeed, and wondered; but although he felt her charm upon him from time to time, he resolved that nothing should induce him to relax even so far as he had done already more than once dur-

ing the interview. She had placed him in a foolish position once before, and he would not expose himself to being made ridiculous again, in her eyes or his. He could not discover what intention she had in trying to lead him back to her, but he attributed it to her vanity. She regretted, perhaps, having rebuked him so soon, or perhaps she had imagined that he would have made further and more determined efforts to see her. Possibly, too, she really wished to ask a service of him, and wished to assure herself that she could depend upon him by previously extracting an avowal of his devotion. It was clear that one of the two had mistaken the other's character or mood, though it was impossible to say which was the one deceived.

The silence which followed lasted some time, and threatened to become awkward. Maria Consuelo could not or would not speak, and Orsino did not know what to say. He thought of inquiring what the commission might be with which, according to her note, she had wished to entrust him. But an instant's reflection told him that the question would be tactless. If she had invented the idea as an excuse for seeing him, to mention it would be to force her hand, as card-players say, and he had no intention of doing that. Even if she really had something to ask of him, he had no right to change the subject so suddenly. He thought him of a better question.

"You wrote to me that you were going away," he said quietly. "But you will come back next winter, will you not, madam?"

"I do not know," she answered, vaguely. Then she started a little, as though understanding his words. "What am I saying!" she exclaimed. "Of course I shall come back."

"Have you been drinking from the Trevi fountain by moonlight, like those mad English?" he asked, with a smile.

"It is not necessary. I know that I shall come back,—if I am alive."

"How you say that! You are as strong as I——"

"Stronger, perhaps. But then—who knows! The weak ones sometimes last the longest."

Orsino thought she was growing very sentimental, though as he looked at her he was struck again by the look of suffering in her eyes. Whatever weakness she felt was visible there, there was nothing in the full, firm little hand, in the strong and easy pose of the head, in the softly-coloured ear half hidden by her hair, that could suggest a coming danger to her splendid health.

"Let us take it for granted that you will come back to us," said Orsino cheerfully.

"Very well, we will take it for granted. What then?"

The question was so sudden and direct that Orsino fancied there ought to be an evident answer to it.

"What then?" he repeated, after a moment's hesitation. "I suppose you will live in these same rooms again, and with your permission, a certain Orsino Saracinesca will visit you from time to time, and be rude, and be sent away into exile for his sins. And Madame d'Aranjuez will go a great deal to Madame del Ferice's and to other ultra-White houses, which will prevent the said Orsino from meeting her in society. She will also be more beautiful than ever, and the daily papers will describe a certain number of gowns which she will bring with her from Paris, or Vienna, or London, or whatever great capital is the chosen official residence of her great dress-maker. And the world will not otherwise change very materially in the course of eight months."

Orsino laughed lightly, not at his own speech, which he had constructed rather clumsily under the spur of necessity, but in the hope that she would laugh, too, and begin to talk more carelessly. But Maria Consuelo was evidently not inclined for anything but the most serious view of the world, past, present, and future.

"Yes," she answered gravely. "I dare say you are right. One comes, one shows one's clothes, and one goes away again,—and that is all. It would be very much the same if one did not come. It is a great mistake to think one's self necessary to any one. Only things are necessary,—food, money, and something to talk about."

"You might add friends to the list," said Orsino, who was afraid of being called brutal again if he did not make some mild remonstrance to such a sweeping assertion.

"Friends are included under the head of 'something to talk about,'" answered Maria Consuelo.

"That is an encouraging view."

"Like all views one gets by experience."

"You grow more and more bitter."

"Does the world grow sweeter as one grows older?"

"Neither you nor I have lived long enough to know," answered Orsino.

"Facts make life long, not years."

"So long as they leave no sign of age, what does it matter?"

"I do not care for that sort of flattery."

"Because it is not flattery at all. You know the truth too well. I am not ingenious enough to flatter you, madam. Perfection is not flattered when it is called perfect."

"It is at all events impossible to exaggerate better than you can," answered Maria Consuelo, laughing at last at the overwhelming compliment. "Where did you learn that?"

"At your feet, madam. The contemplation of great masterpieces enlarges the intelligence and deepens the power of expression."

"And I am a masterpiece—of what? Of art? Of caprice? Of consistency?"

"Of nature," answered Orsino promptly.

Again Maria Consuelo laughed a little, at the mere quickness of the answer. Orsino was delighted with himself, for he fancied he was leading her rapidly away from the dangerous ground upon which she had been

trying to force him. But her next words showed him that he had not yet succeeded.

"Who will make me laugh during all these months?" she exclaimed with a little sadness.

Orsino thought she was strangely obstinate, and wondered what she would say next.

"Dear me, madam," he said, "if you are so kind as to laugh at my poor wit, you will not have to seek far to find some one to amuse you better!"

He knew how to put on an expression of perfect simplicity when he pleased, and Maria Consuelo looked at him, trying to be sure whether he were in earnest or not. But his face baffled her.

"You are too modest," she said.

"Do you think it is a defect? Shall I cultivate a little more assurance of manner?" he asked, very innocently.

"Not to-day. Your first attempt might lead you into extremes."

"There is not the slightest fear of that, madam," he answered with some emphasis.

She coloured a little and her closed lips smiled in a way he had often noticed before. He congratulated himself upon these signs of approaching ill-temper, which promised an escape from his difficulty. To take leave of her suddenly was to abandon the field, and that he would not do. She had determined to force him into a confession of devotion, and he was equally determined not to satisfy her. He had tried to lead her off her track with frivolous talk and had failed. He would try and irritate her instead, but without incurring the charge of rudeness. Why she was making such an attack upon him was beyond his understanding, but he resented it, and made up his mind neither to fly nor yield. If he had been a hundredth part as cynical as he liked to fancy himself, he would have acted very differently. But he was young enough to have been wounded by his former dismissal, though he hardly knew it.

and to seek almost instinctively to revenge his wrongs. He did not find it easy. He would not have believed that such a woman as Maria Consuelo could so far forget her pride as to go begging for a declaration of love.

"I suppose you will take Gouache's portrait away with you?" he observed, changing the subject with a directness which he fancied would increase her annoyance.

"What makes you think so?" she asked, rather drily.

"I thought it a natural question."

"I cannot imagine what I should do with it. I shall leave it with him."

"You will let him send it to the Salon in Paris, of course?"

"If he likes. You seem interested in the fate of the picture."

"A little. I wondered why you did not have it here, as it has been finished so long."

"Instead of that hideous mirror, you mean? There would be less variety. I should always see myself in the same dress."

"No—on the opposite wall. You might compare truth with fiction in that way."

"To the advantage of Gouache's fiction, you would say. You were more complimentary a little while ago."

"You imagine more rudeness than even I am capable of inventing."

"That is saying much. Why did you change the subject just now?"

"Because I saw that you were annoyed at something. Besides, we were talking about myself, if I remember rightly."

"Have you never heard that a man should always talk to a woman about himself or herself?"

"No. I never heard that. Shall we talk of you, then, madam?"

"Do you care to talk of me?" asked Maria Consuelo.

Another direct attack, Orsino thought. "I would rather hear you talk of yourself," he answered without the least hesitation.

"If I were to tell you my thoughts

about myself at the present moment, they would surprise you very much."

"Agreeably or disagreeably?"

"I do not know. Are you vain?"

"As a peacock!" replied Orsino quickly.

"Ah,—then what I am thinking would not interest you."

"Why not?"

"Because if it is not flattering it would wound you, and if it is flattering it would disappoint you by falling short of your ideal of yourself."

"Yet I confess that I would like to know what you think of me, though I would much rather hear what you think of yourself."

"On one condition I will tell you."

"What is that?"

"That you will give me your word to give me your own opinion of me afterwards."

"The adjectives are ready, madam I give you my word."

"You give it so easily! How can I believe you?"

"It is so easy to give in such a case, when one has nothing disagreeable to say."

"Then you think me agreeable?"

"Eminently!"

"And charming?"

"Perfectly!"

"And beautiful!"

"How can you doubt it?"

"And in all other respects exactly like all the women in society to whom you repeat the same commonplaces every day of your life?"

The feint had been dexterous and the thrust was sudden, straight and unexpected.

"Madam!" exclaimed Orsino in the deprecatory tone of a man taken by surprise.

"You see,—you have nothing to say!" She laughed a little bitterly.

"You take too much for granted," he said, recovering himself. "You suppose that because I agree with you upon one point after another, I agree with you in the conclusion. You do not even wait to hear my answer, and

you tell me that I am checkmated when I have a dozen moves from which to choose. Besides, you have directly infringed the conditions. You have fired before the signal, and an arbitration would go against you. You have done fifty things contrary to agreement, and you accuse me of being dumb in my own defence. There is not much justice in that. You promise to tell me a certain secret on condition that I will tell you another. Then, without saying a word on your own part you stone me with quick questions and cry *victory* because I protest. You begin before I have had so much as——”

“For heaven’s sake, stop!” cried Maria Consuelo, interrupting a speech which threatened to go on for twenty minutes. “You talk of chess, duelling, and stoning to death, in one sentence, —I am utterly confused! You upset all my ideas!”

“Considering how you have disturbed mine, it is a fair revenge. And since we both admit that we have disturbed that balance upon which alone depends all possibility of conversation, I think that I can do nothing more graceful,—pardon me, nothing less ungraceful—than wish you a pleasant journey, which I do with all my heart, madam.”

Thereupon Orsino rose and took his hat.

“Sit down. Do not go yet,” said Maria Consuelo, growing a shade paler, and speaking with an evident effort.

“Ah—true!” exclaimed Orsino. “We were forgetting the little commission you spoke of in your note. I am entirely at your service.”

Maria Consuelo looked at him quickly and her lips trembled. “Never mind that,” she said unsteadily. “I will not trouble you. But I do not want you to go away as—as you were going. I feel as though we had been quarrelling. Perhaps we have. But let us say we are good friends,—if we only say it.”

Orsino was touched and disturbed.

Her face was very white and her hand trembled visibly as she held it out. He took it in his own without hesitation.

“If you care for my friendship you shall have no better friend in the world than I,” he said simply and naturally.

“Thank you,—good-bye. I shall leave to-morrow.”

The words were almost broken, as though she were losing control of her voice. As he closed the door behind him the sound of a wild and passionate sob came to him through the panel. He stood still, listening and hesitating. The truth which would have long been clear to an older or a vainer man, flashed upon him suddenly. She loved him very much, and he no longer cared for her. That was the reason why she had behaved so strangely, throwing her pride and dignity to the winds in her desperate attempt to get from him a single kind and affectionate word,—from him, who had poured into her ear so many words of love but two months earlier, and from whom to draw a bare admission of friendship to-day she had almost shed tears.

To go back into the room would be madness; since he did not love her, it would almost be an insult. He bent his head and walked slowly down the corridor. He had not gone far when he was confronted by a small dark figure that stopped the way. He recognised Maria Consuelo’s elderly maid.

“I beg your pardon, Signore Principe,” said the little black-eyed woman. “You will allow me to say a few words? I thank you, Eccellenza. It is about my Signora in there, of whom I have charge.”

“Of whom you have charge?” repeated Orsino, not understanding her.

“Yes—precisely. Of course I am only her maid. You understand that. But I have charge of her though she does not know it. The poor Signora has had terrible trouble during the last few years, and at times,—you understand?—she is a little—yes—here.” She tapped her forehead.

"She is better now. But in my position I sometimes think it wiser to warn some friend of hers, in strict confidence. It sometimes saves some little unnecessary complication, and I was ordered to do so by the doctors we last consulted in Paris. You will forgive me, Eccellenza, I am sure."

Orsino stared at the woman for some seconds in blank astonishment. She smiled in a placid, self-confident way.

"You mean that Madame d'Aranjuez is,—mentally deranged, and that you are her keeper? It is a little hard to believe, I confess."

"Would you like to see my certificates, Signore Principe? Or the written directions of the doctors? I am sure you are discreet."

"I have no right to see anything of the kind," answered Orsino coldly. "Of course if you are acting under instructions it is no concern of mine."

He would have gone forward, but she suddenly produced a small bit of note-paper, neatly folded, and offered it to him. "I thought you might like to know where we are until we return," she said, continuing to speak in a very low voice. "It is the address."

Orsino made an impatient gesture. He was on the point of refusing the information which he had not taken the trouble to ask of Maria Consuelo herself. But he changed his mind and felt in his pocket for something to give the woman. It seemed the easiest and simplest way of getting rid of her. The only note he had chanced to be one of greater value than necessary.

"A thousand thanks, Eccellenza!" whispered the maid, overcome by what she took for an intentional piece of generosity.

Orsino left the hotel as quickly as he could. "For improbable situations, commend me to the nineteenth century and the society in which we live!" he said to himself as he emerged into the street.

CHAPTER XVI.

It was long before Orsino saw Maria Consuelo again, but the circumstances of his last meeting with her constantly recurred to his mind during the following months. It is one of the chief characteristics of Rome that it seems to be one of the most central cities in Europe during the winter, whereas in the summer months it appears to be immensely remote from the rest of the civilised world. From having been the prey of the inexpressible foreigner in his shooting season, it suddenly becomes, and remains during about five months, the happy hunting ground of the silent flea, the buzzing fly, and the insinuating mosquito. The streets are, indeed, still full of people, and long lines of carriages may be seen towards sunset in the Villa Borghesa and in the narrow Corso. Rome and the Romans are not so easily parted as London and London society, for instance. May comes,—the queen of the months in the south. June follows, and southern blood rejoices in the first strong sunshine. July trudges in at the gates sweating under the cloudless sky, heavy, slow of foot, oppressed by the breath of the coming dog-star. Still the nights are cool. Still, towards sunset, the refreshing breeze sweeps up from the sea and fills the streets. Then, behind closely-fastened blinds, the glass windows are opened and the weary hand drops the fan at last. Then men and women array themselves in the garments of civilisation and sally forth, in carriages, on foot, and in trams, according to the degrees of social importance which provide that in old countries the middle term shall be made to suffer for the priceless treasure of a respectability which is a little higher than the tram and financially not quite equal to the cab. Then, at that magic touch of the west wind the house-fly retires to his own peculiar Inferno, wherever that may be, the mosquito and the gnat pause in their work of darkness and

blood to concert fresh and more sanguinary deeds, and even the joyous and wicked flea tires of the war-dance and lays down his weary head to snatch a hard-earned nap. July drags on, and terrible August treads the burning streets, bleaching the very dust upon the pavement, scourging the broad *campagna* with fiery flashes of heat. Then the white-hot sky reddens in the evening when it cools, as the white iron does when it is taken from the forge. Then at last, all those who can escape from the condemned city flee for their lives to the hills, while those who must face the torment of the sun and the poison of the air turn pale in their sufferings, feebly curse their fate and then grow listless, weak and irresponsible as over-driven galley-slaves, indifferent to everything—work, rest, blows, food, sleep, and the hope of release. The sky darkens suddenly; there is a sort of horror in the stifling air. People do not talk much, and if they do are apt to quarrel and sometimes to kill one another without warning. The splash of the fountains has a dull sound like the pouring out of molten lead. The horses' hoofs strike visible sparks out of the grey stones in broad daylight. Many houses are shut, and one fancies that there must be a dead man in each whom no one will bury. A few great drops of rain make ink-stains on the pavement at noon, and there is an exasperating, half-sulphurous smell abroad. Late in the afternoon they fall again. An evil wind comes in hot blasts from all quarters at once; then a low roar like an earthquake, and presently a crash that jars upon the over-wrought nerves; great and plashing drops again, a sharp short flash,—then crash upon crash, deluge upon deluge, and the worst is over. Summer has received its first mortal wound;—but its death is more fatal than its life. The noontide heat is fierce and drinks up the moisture of the rain and the fetid dust with it. The fever-wraith rises in the damp, cool night far out

in the *campagna*, and steals up to the walls of the city, and over them and under them and into the houses. If there are any yet left in Rome who can by any possibility take themselves out of it, they are not long in going. Till that moment, there has been only suffering to be borne; now, there is danger of something worse. Now, indeed, the city becomes a desert inhabited by white-faced ghosts. Now, if it be a year of cholera, the dead-carts rattle through the streets all night on their way to the gate of Saint Lawrence, and the workmen count their numbers when they meet at dawn. But the bad days are not many, if only there be rain enough, for a little is worse than none. The nights lengthen and the September gales sweep away the poison-mists with kindly strength. Body and soul revive, as the ripe grapes appear in their vine-covered baskets at the street corners. Rich October is coming, the month in which the small citizens of Rome take their wives and the children to the near towns, to Marino, to Frascati, to Albano and Aricia, to eat late fruits and drink new must, with songs and laughter, and small miseries and great delights such as are remembered a whole year. The first clear breeze out of the north shakes down the dying leaves and brightens the blue air. The brown *campagna* turns green again, and the heart of the poor lame cab-horse is lifted up. The huge porter of the palace lays aside his linen coat and his pipe, and opens wide the great gates; for the masters are coming back, from their castles and country places, from the sea and from the mountains, from north and south, from the magic shore of Sorrento, and from distant French bathing-places, some with brides or husbands, some with rosy Roman babies making their first triumphal entrance into Rome, and some, again, returning companionless to the home they had left in companionship. The great and complicated machinery of social life is set in order and repaired for the winter;

the lost or damaged pieces in the engine are carefully replaced with new ones which will do as well or better, the joints and bearings are lubricated, the whistle of the first invitation is heard, there is some puffing and a little creaking at first, and then the big wheels begin to go slowly round, solemnly and regularly as ever, while all the little wheels run as fast as they can and set fire to their axles in the attempt to keep up the speed, and are finally jammed and caught up and smashed, as little wheels are sure to be when they try to act like big ones. But unless something happens to one of the very biggest the machine does not stop until the end of the season, when it is taken to pieces again for repairs.

That is the brief history of a Roman year, of which the main points are very much like those of its predecessor and successor. The framework is the same, but the decorations change, slowly, surely, and not, perhaps, advantageously, as the younger generation crowds into the place of the older, as young acquaintances take the place of old friends, as faces strange to us hide faces we have loved.

Orsino Saracinesca, in his new character as a contractor and a man of business, knew that he must either spend the greater part of the summer in town, or leave his affairs in the hands of Andrea Contini. The latter course was repugnant to him, partly because he still felt a beginner's interest in his first success, and partly because he had a shrewd suspicion that Contini, if left to himself in the hot weather, might be tempted to devote more time to music than to architecture. The business, too, was now on a much larger scale than before, though Orsino had taken his mother's advice in not at once going so far as he might have gone. It needed all his own restless energy, all Contini's practical talents, and perhaps more of Del Ferice's influence than either of them suspected, to keep it going on the road to success.

In July Orsino's people made ready to go up to Saracinesca. The old prince, to every one's surprise, declared his intention of going to England, and roughly refused to be accompanied by any one of the family. He wanted, to find out some old friends, he said, and desired the satisfaction of spending a couple of months in peace, which was quite impossible at home, owing to Giovanni's outrageous temper and Orsino's craze for business. He thereupon embraced them all affectionately, indulged in a hearty laugh, and departed in a special carriage with his own servants.

Giovanni objected to Orsino's staying in Rome during the great heat. Orsino had not as yet entered into any explanation with his father, but the latter understood well enough that the business had turned out better than had been expected, and began to feel an interest in its further success for his son's sake. He saw the boy developing into a man by a process which he would naturally have supposed to be the worst possible one, judging from his own point of view. But he could not find fault with the result. There was no disputing the mental superiority of the Orsino of July over the Orsino of the preceding January. Whatever the sensation which Giovanni experienced as he contemplated the growing change, it was not one of anxiety nor of disappointment. But he had a Roman's well-founded prejudice against spending August and September in town. His objections gave rise to some discussion, in which Corona joined.

Orsino enlarged upon the necessity of attending in person to the execution of his contracts. Giovanni suggested that he should find some trustworthy person to take his place. Corona was in favour of a compromise. It would be easy, she said, for Orsino to spend two or three days of every week in Rome and the remainder in the country with his father and mother. They were all three quite right according to their own views, and they all three knew it.

Moreover they were all three very obstinate people. The consequence was that Orsino, who was in possession, so to say, since the other two were trying to make him change his mind, got the best of the argument and won his first pitched battle. Not that there was any apparent hostility, or that any of the three spoke hotly or loudly. They were none of them like old Saracinesca, whose feats of argumentation were vehement, eccentric, and fiery as his own nature. They talked with apparent calm through a long summer's afternoon, and the vanquished retired with a fairly good grace, leaving Orsino master of the field. But on that occasion Giovanni Saracinesca first formed the opinion that his son was a match for him, and that it would be wise in future to ascertain the chances of success before incurring the risk of a humiliating defeat.

Giovanni and his wife went out together and talked over the matter as their carriage swept round the great avenues of Villa Borghesa.

"There is no question of the fact that Orsino is growing up,—is grown up already," said Sant' Ilario, glancing at Corona's calm, dark face.

She smiled with a certain pride as she heard the words. "Yes," she answered, "he is a man. It is a mistake to treat him as a boy any longer."

"Do you think it is this sudden interest in business that has changed him so?"

"Of course,—what else?"

"Madame d'Aranjuez, for instance," Giovanni suggested.

"I do not believe she ever had the least influence over him. The flirtation seems to have died a natural death. I confess, I hoped it might end in that way, and I am glad if it has. And I am very glad that Orsino is succeeding so well. Do you know, dear? I am glad, because you did not believe it possible that he should."

"No; I did not. And now that I begin to understand it, he does not like to talk to me about his affairs. I suppose that is only natural. Tell me,

has he really made money? Or have you been giving him money to lose, in order that he may buy experience?"

"He has succeeded alone," said Corona proudly. "I would give him whatever he needed, but he needs nothing. He is immensely clever and immensely energetic. How could he fail?"

"You seem to admire our first-born, my dear," observed Giovanni with a smile.

"To tell the truth, I do. I have no doubt that he does all sorts of things which he ought not to do, and of which I know nothing. You did the same at his age, and I shall be quite satisfied if he turns out like you. I would not like to have a lady-like son with white hands and delicate sensibilities, and hypocritical affectations of exaggerated morality. I think I should be capable of trying to make such a boy bad, if it only made him manly,—though I dare say that would be very wrong."

"No doubt," said Giovanni. "But we shall not be placed in any such position by Orsino, my dear. You remember that little affair last year in England? It was very nearly a scandal. But then, the English are easily led into temptation and very easily scandalised afterwards. Orsino will not err in the direction of hypocritical morality. But that is not the question. I wish to know, from you since he does not confide in me, how far he is really succeeding."

Corona gave her husband a remarkably clear statement of Orsino's affairs, without exaggeration so far as the facts were concerned, but not without highly favourable comment. She did not attempt to conceal her triumph, now that success had been in a measure attained, and she did not hesitate to tell Giovanni that he ought to have encouraged and supported the boy from the first.

Giovanni listened with very great interest, and bore her affectionate reproaches with equanimity. He felt in his heart that he had done right, and

he somehow still believed that things were not in reality all that they seemed to be. There was something in Orsino's immediate success against odds apparently heavy which disturbed his judgment. He had not, it was true, any personal experience of the building speculations in the city, nor of financial transactions in general, as at present understood, and he had recently heard of cases in which individuals had succeeded beyond their own wildest expectations. There was, perhaps, no reason why Orsino should not do as well as other people, or even better, in spite of his extreme youth. Andrea Contini was probably a man of superior talent, well able to have directed the whole affair alone if other circumstances had been favourable to him; and there was on the whole nothing to prove that the two young men had received more than their fair share of assistance or accommodation from the bank. But Giovanni knew well enough that Del Ferice was the most influential personage in the bank in question, and the mere suggestion of his name lent to the whole affair a suspicious quality which disturbed Orsino's father. In spite of all reasonable reflections there was an air of unnatural good fortune in the case which he did not like, and he had enough experience of Del Ferice's tortuous character to distrust his intentions. He would have preferred to see his son lose money through Ugo rather than that Orsino should owe the latter the smallest thanks. The fact that he had not spoken with the man for over twenty years did not increase the confidence he felt in him. In that time Del Ferice had developed into a very important personage, having much greater power to do harm than he had possessed in former days, and it was not to be supposed that he had forgotten old wounds or given up all hope of avenging them. Del Ferice was not very subject to that sort of forgetfulness.

When Corona had finished speaking, Giovanni was silent for a few moments.

"Is it not splendid?" Corona asked enthusiastically. "Why do you not say anything? One would think that you were not pleased."

"On the contrary, so far as Orsino is concerned, I am delighted. But I do not trust Del Ferice."

"Del Ferice is far too clever a man to ruin Orsino," answered Corona.

"Exactly. That is the trouble. That is what makes me feel that though Orsino has worked hard and shown extraordinary intelligence,—and deserves credit for that—yet he would not have succeeded in the same way if he had dealt with any other bank. Del Ferice has helped him. Possibly Orsino knows that, as well as we do, but he certainly does not know what part Del Ferice played in our lives, Corona. If he did, he would not accept his help."

In her turn Corona was silent and a look of disappointment came into her face. She remembered a certain afternoon in the mountains when she had entreated Giovanni to let Del Ferice escape, and Giovanni had yielded reluctantly and had given the fugitive a guide to take him to the frontier. She wondered whether the generous impulse of that day was to bear evil fruit at last. "Orsino knows nothing about it at all," she said at last. "We kept the secret of Del Ferice's escape very carefully,—for there were good reasons to be careful in those days. Orsino only knows that you once fought a duel with the man and wounded him."

"I think it is time that he knew more."

"Of what use can it be to tell him those old stories?" asked Corona. "And after all, I do not believe that Del Ferice has done so much. If you could have followed Orsino's work, day by day and week by week, as I have, you would see how much is really due to his energy. Any other banker would have done as much as he. Besides, it is in Del Ferice's own interest——"

"That is the trouble," interrupted Giovanni. "It is bad enough that he

should help Orsino. It is much worse that he should help him in order to make use of him. If, as you say, any other bank would do as much, then let him go to another bank. If he owes Del Ferice money at the present moment, we will pay it for him."

"You forget that he has bought the buildings he is now finishing, from Del Ferice, on a mortgage."

Giovanni laughed a little. "How you have learned to talk about mortgages and deeds and all sorts of business!" he exclaimed. "But what you say is not an objection. We can pay off these mortgages, I suppose, and take the risk ourselves."

"Of course we could do that," Corona answered, thoughtfully. "But I really think you exaggerate the whole affair. For the time being, Del Ferice is not a man, but a banker. His personal character and former doings do not enter into the matter."

"I think they do," said Giovanni, still unconvinced.

"At all events, do not make trouble now, dear," said Corona in earnest tones. "Let the present contract be executed and finished, and then speak to Orsino before he makes another. Whatever Del Ferice may have done, you can see for yourself that Orsino is developing in a way we had not expected, and is becoming a serious, energetic man. Do not step in now, and check the growth of what is good. You will regret it as much as I shall. When he has finished these buildings he will have enough experience to make a new departure."

"I hate the idea of receiving a favour from Del Ferice, or of laying him under an obligation. I think I will go to him myself."

"To Del Ferice?" Corona started and looked round at Giovanni as she sat. She had a sudden vision of new trouble.

"Yes. Why not? I will go to him and tell him that I would rather wind up my son's business with him, as our former relations were not of a nature to make transactions of mutual

profit either fitting or even permissible between any of our family and Ugo Del Ferice."

"For Heaven's sake, Giovanni, do not do that."

"And why not?" He was surprised at her evident distress.

"For my sake, then,—do not quarrel with Del Ferice. It was different then, in the old days. I could not bear it now——" she stopped, and her lower lip trembled a little.

"Do you love me better than you did then, Corona?"

"So much better, I cannot tell you."

She touched his hand with hers and her dark eyes were a little veiled as they met his. Both were silent for a moment.

"I have no intention of quarrelling with Del Ferice, dear," said Giovanni, gently. His face had grown a shade paler as she spoke. The power of her hand and voice to move him had not diminished in all the years of peaceful happiness that had passed so quickly. "I do not mean any such thing," he said again. "But I mean this. I will not have it said that Del Ferice has made a fortune for Orsino, nor that Orsino has helped Del Ferice's interests. I see no way but to interfere myself. I can do it without the suspicion of a quarrel."

"It will be a great mistake, Giovanni. Wait till there is a new contract."

"I will think of it before doing anything definite."

Corona well knew that she should get no greater concession than this. The point of honour had been touched in Giovanni's sensibilities and his character was stubborn and determined where his old prejudices were concerned. She loved him very dearly, and this very obstinacy of his pleased her. But she fancied that trouble of some sort was imminent. She understood her son's nature, too, and dreaded lest he should be forced into opposing his father.

It struck her that she might herself act as intermediary. She could cer-

tainly obtain concessions from Orsino which Giovanni could not hope to extract by force or stratagem. But the wisdom of her own proposal in the matter seemed unassailable. The business now in hand should be allowed to run its natural course before anything was done to break off the relations between Orsino and Del Ferice.

In the evening she found an opportunity of speaking with Orsino in private. She repeated to him the details of her conversation with Giovanni during the drive in the afternoon.

"My dear mother," answered Orsino, "I do not trust Del Ferice any more than you and my father trust him. You talk of things which he did years ago, but you do not tell me what those things were. So far as I understand, it all happened before you were married. My father and he quarrelled about something, and I suppose there was a lady concerned in the matter. Unless you were the lady in question, and unless what he did was in the nature of an insult to you, I cannot see how the matter concerns me. They fought and it ended there, as affairs of honour do. If it touched you, then tell me so, and I will break with Del Ferice to-morrow morning."

Corona was silent, for Orsino's speech was very plain, and if she answered it at all, the answer must be the truth. There could be no escape from that. And the truth would be very hard to tell. At that time she had been still the wife of old Astrardente, and Del Ferice's offence had been that he had purposely concealed himself in the conservatory of the Frangipani's palace in order to overhear what Giovanni Saracinesca was about to say to another man's wife. The fact that on that memorable night she had bravely resisted a very great temptation did not affect the difficulty of the present case in any way. She asked herself rather whether Del Ferice's eavesdropping would appear to Orsino to be in the nature of an

insult to her, to use his own words, and she had no doubt but that it would seem so. At the same time she would find it hard to explain to her son why Del Ferice suspected that there was to be anything said to her worth overhearing, seeing that she bore at that time the name of another man then still living. How could Orsino understand all that had gone before? Even now, though she knew that she had acted well, she humbly believed that she might have done much better. How would her son judge her? She was silent, waiting for him to speak again.

"That would be the only conceivable reason for my breaking with Del Ferice," said Orsino. "We only have business relations, and I do not go to his house. I went once. I saw no reason for telling you so at the time, and I have not been there again. It was at the beginning of the whole affair. Outside of the bank we are the merest acquaintances. But I repeat what I said. If he ever did anything which makes it dishonourable for me to accept even ordinary business services from him, let me know it. I have some right to hear the truth."

Corona hesitated, and laid the case again before her own conscience, and tried to imagine herself in her son's position. It was hard to reach a conclusion. There was no doubt but that when she had learned the truth, long after the event, she had felt that she had been insulted and justly avenged. If she said nothing now, Orsino would suspect something and would assuredly go to his father, from whom he would get a view of the case not conspicuous for its moderation. And Giovanni would undoubtedly tell his son the details of what had followed, how Del Ferice had attempted to hinder the marriage when it was at last possible, and all the rest of the story. At the same time, she felt that so far as her personal sensibilities were concerned, she had not the least objection to the

continuance of a mere business relation between Orsino and Del Ferice. She was more forgiving than Giovanni.

"I will tell you this much, my dear boy," she said at last. "That old quarrel did concern me and no one else. Your father feels more strongly about it than I do, because he fought for me and not for himself. You trust me, Orsino; you know that I would rather see you dead than doing anything dishonourable. Very well. Do not ask any more questions, and do not go to your father about it. Del Ferice has only advanced you money in a business way, on good security and at a high interest. So far as I can judge of the point of honour involved, what happened long ago need not prevent your doing what you are doing now. Possibly, when you have finished the present contract, you may think it wiser to apply to some other bank, or to work on your own account with my money."

Corona believed that she had found the best way out of the difficulty, and Orsino seemed satisfied, for he nodded thoughtfully and said nothing. The day had been filled with argument and discussion about his determination to stay in town, and he was weary of the perpetual question and answer. He knew his mother well, and was willing to take her advice for the present. She, on her part, told Giovanni what she had done, and he consented to consider the matter a little longer before interfering. He disliked even the idea of a business relation extremely, but he feared that there was more behind the appearances of commercial fairness than either he or Orsino himself could understand. The better Orsino succeeded, the less his father was pleased, and his suspicions were not unfounded. He knew from San Giacinto that success was becoming uncommon, and he knew that all Orsino's industry and

energy could not have sufficed to counterbalance his inexperience. Andrea Contini, too, had been recommended by Del Ferice, and was presumably Del Ferice's man.

On the following day Giovanni and Corona with the three younger boys went up to Saracinesca, leaving Orsino alone in the great palace, to his own considerable satisfaction. He was well pleased with himself and especially at having carried his point. At his age, and with his constitution, the heat was a matter of supreme indifference to him, and he looked forward with delight to a summer of uninterrupted work in the not uncongenial society of Andrea Contini. As for the work itself, it was beginning to have a sort of fascination for him as he understood it better. The love of building, the passion for stone and brick and mortar, is inherent in some natures, and is capable of growing into a mania little short of actual insanity. Orsino began to ask himself seriously whether it were too late to study architecture as a profession, and in the meanwhile he learned more of it in practice from Contini than he could have acquired in twice the time at any polytechnic school in Europe.

He liked Contini himself more and more as the days went by. Hitherto he had been much inclined to judge his own countrymen from his own class. He was beginning to see that he had understood little or nothing of the real Italian nature when uninfluenced by foreign blood. The study interested and pleased him. Only one unpleasant memory occasionally disturbed his peace of mind. When he thought of his last meeting with Maria Consuelo he hated himself for the part he had played, though he was quite unable to account logically, upon his assumed principles, for the severity of his self-condemnation.

(To be continued.)

MONTAIGNE.

II.

IN a former paper on Montaigne¹ I expressed my belief that the most valuable and interesting feature of his book was the portrait of the man himself. But the book has another side which must not be forgotten. Montaigne, if not the acutest or deepest thinker of his age in France, was at any rate the most original and independent one. And his age was full of interest. It was a time of storm and stress; when old beliefs were being discarded, and new ones were not yet accepted in their place; when the hopes and aspirations, which had run so high in the full flood-time of the Renaissance, were beginning to subside, and men were asking themselves whether after all this wisdom of the ancients, at which they had been bidden to drink as if it were the fountain of life, had worked any improvement in the world. They saw their country divided into two camps by a civil and religious war; they saw a court rivalling that of Elagabalus for dissoluteness, effeminacy and superstition. What had Humanism done for them? Had it brought them any nearer to the light? These were the questions that were vexing men's souls, and on all of them Montaigne, in his somewhat lazy and disconnected but thoroughly sincere and independent fashion, had thought much. His maturest years had been spent chiefly in tranquil meditation, instead of in fighting like the rest of his class. It is reasonable therefore to expect that the *Essays*, apart from their value as a revelation of character, apart from their being the most important contribution to psychology that one man has ever made,

should be valuable as the expression of Montaigne's opinions. In fact, it was no doubt in this light that they were chiefly regarded by Montaigne's contemporaries, not only in France but in England.

I have spoken of Montaigne's independence as a thinker. In this he seems at first sight merely to be working out the principle of the Renaissance, the key-note of which was the insistence on the right of free inquiry, unfettered by the discipline and dogmas of the Church. But impelled by the common craving of mankind for authority in matters of opinion, the majority of the writers and thinkers of the Renaissance had put Antiquity in the place of the Church. This had been going on in France during the first half of the sixteenth century, and in science hardly less than in literature. The leading anatomists at Paris in the reign of Francis I., Gunther of Andernach and Sylvius, did little more than expound Galen to their pupils. The first Frenchman who really substituted experiment for traditional authority as the basis of scientific knowledge was, so far as I know, Ambroise Paré, the founder of modern surgery. And what Paré did for surgery, Montaigne did for thought generally. It is true that to some extent he was anticipated by Rabelais, who criticised the political and social phenomena of his age by the natural light of his own good sense, and not by substituting one reflected light for another. But Rabelais, in spite of his strong scientific proclivities, was too thoroughly saturated with the learning of the ancients to be able to shake off entirely the pressure of their authority. Though he laughs at Epistemon for thinking that the solution of every difficulty and the remedy for every evil

¹ *Macmillan's Magazine* for September, 1890.

could be found in some ancient author, he had, as he well knew, something of Epistemon in himself.

But Montaigne, though he hardly yields to Rabelais in his admiration for the ancient writers, and though he often accepts their statements as regards matters of fact with considerable credulity, is never dominated by them in matters of opinion. The sole criterion, by which he tests every principle, every custom, every tradition, is his own good sense. And this is none the less true because he quotes the ancient writers, especially his favourites Plutarch and Seneca, at every turn, and not only quotes from them, but pillages them without acknowledgment, taking, as he quaintly says, here a leg and there a wing. For he does not go to them for opinions, but only for illustrations of opinions which he has already formed for himself. He first wrote his essay and then added the quotations ; as I pointed out in my former paper, the first edition of the *Essays* contained very few quotations. Montaigne's own explanation of the matter is perfectly correct. "Certainly I have allowed as a concession to public opinion that these borrowed ornaments should accompany me ; but I do not intend that they should cover or hide me. That is the very reverse of my intention, which is only to display what is my own, ay and what is my own by nature ; and had I had sufficient confidence in myself, at all hazards I had spoken alone." Thus although, as has been discovered by a modern French scholar who has been at pains to investigate the subject, Montaigne's borrowed ornaments are far more numerous than appears upon the surface, it none the less remains true that his book, not only in style but in thought, is one of the most original books that have ever been written.

Montaigne is not only an original thinker in the sense that he forms his opinions for himself, instead of accepting without examination those of

others ; he is also original in the sense that he does not accept traditional opinions. A long-established usage, a doctrine consecrated by the thought of centuries has no weight with him, unless he has tested it for himself. And to this testing he brings a mind singularly free from prejudices whether of education or nationality. He is as thoroughly cosmopolitan as an Encyclopædist of the eighteenth century. "I count all men my compatriots, and embrace a Pole as willingly as a Frenchman, subordinating the bonds of nationality to those which are universal and common to all." One prejudice however Montaigne had ; he liked to pose as a *grand seigneur*. We have seen how he presented an escutcheon of his arms to the bathhouse at Bagni di Lucca, and how he prided himself on writing illegibly. As a matter of fact his nobility was neither ancient nor splendid. His great-grandfather, Ramon Eyquem, was a merchant and a simple *bourgeois* of Bordeaux. The estate of Montaigne had only been in his family a hundred years, having been bought by his grandfather. Brantôme especially cites him as an instance of the degradation which the order of St. Michael had suffered by being conferred on the inferior *noblesse* of the Bar. But on this nobility, modest though it was, Montaigne greatly prided himself.

I have spoken of his good sense. It is a point to be noticed, because it is one of the chief causes of his popularity, especially in this country. A man may be a thinker of absolute originality, he may have emancipated himself completely from the influence of tradition, but he may be a madman. Or without being a madman he may be so entirely destitute of good sense that his opinions fall to the ground unheeded, and bear no fruit ; he may disbelieve in the theory of gravity, or question the roundness of the earth. Take the case of a man who has had considerable influence, take Rousseau. No one ever more completely set

tradition at defiance. He attacked not only this or that opinion, but civilisation in general. The burden of the *Contrat Social* and of *Emile* is that civilisation is a mistake. Coming as it did at a peculiar crisis in the development of thought in France, and set off as it was by the charm of a novel and entrancing style, Rousseau's teaching was widely accepted as a new gospel; but at the present day it is for the most part regarded by robust and sober thinkers as the ravings of a wild idealist. The reason is that Rousseau though a brilliant romancer had no common sense. But it was just this common sense, or good sense, as perhaps it is better to call it, that especially distinguished Montaigne. He cared for facts and not for theories; he was a practical and not a logical philosopher; he prescribed not for Utopia but for the world as he found it. It is this quality of good sense, this regard for the limits imposed upon speculation by the phenomena of existing social life, that has endeared him to Englishmen of all ages. From his own day to ours, from Shakespeare to Landor, there is hardly a man who has left a name in letters or public affairs who was not familiar with his writings and loved them.

Of this combination of independent judgment with good sense we get a good instance in Montaigne's literary criticisms. One of the most admired writers of his day was the Spaniard Guevara, the author of the *Dial of Princes* and the *Familiar Letters*. This is what Montaigne says of the *Letters*: "Those who called them golden had a very different opinion of them to what I have." His judgment about Aretino is equally independent and equally sound. He cannot understand why the Italians called him Divine; beyond a gift for ingenious, but laboured and fantastic, epigram, and eloquence of a certain sort, he can see nothing in him out of the way. He thinks the *Axiochus*, which in his time was attributed to Plato, a feeble work, though he modestly adds that

he mistrusts his own judgment. How gratified he would have been to learn that the *Axiochus* was not by Plato. He even ventures to criticise Cicero's style, and that in an age when such a criticism was considered almost blasphemy. "To confess the truth boldly, I find his manner of writing tiresome. . . . if I have spent an hour in reading him, and that's a great deal for me, and I reckon up how much sap and substance I have got from him, I find that for the most part it is nothing but wind." But, as we should expect, he thoroughly appreciated the letters to Atticus, for they were revelations of Cicero's character. For the same reason he liked the lives of Diogenes Laertius, and above all those of his favourite Plutarch. Besides biography his favourite reading was in history and poetry. History he emphatically speaks of as his quarry (*c'est mon gibier*). He liked either simple narrators like Froissart, or historians of real critical power, but, "Unfortunately," he says, "the majority of historians are something between the two, and so spoil everything." His criticisms on Guicciardini, Comines, and the memoirs of du Bellay are extremely good. He had a great admiration for Cæsar's style; "The style not of a pedant, or a monk, or a lawyer, but of a soldier." He gave the palm to Amyot as the first French writer of the day, partly for the simplicity and purity of his language, but especially for having made Plutarch known to Frenchmen. He calls Amyot's translation the breviary of unlearned folk like himself.

Among Latin poets he puts Virgil, Lucretius, Catullus and Horace far above the rest, a judgment which will commend itself to most Latin scholars. He ranks Virgil above Lucretius, though when he comes across certain passages of Lucretius he feels somewhat shaken in his estimate. As for those who compare Ariosto with Virgil, he says they are stupid barbarians, and he prefers Terence to

Plautus. Finally let me quote his forcible version of Horace's well-known lines: "You may play the fool in anything else you please, but not in poetry."

It seems natural to pass from Montaigne's views on books to his views on education; but I need not dwell at any length on this topic, as it has been frequently discussed in histories of educational theories. I cannot help thinking, however, that Montaigne would have been pleasantly surprised to see himself ticketed not only as an educationalist, but as a separate species of that august genus,—a naturalist is I believe what they call him,—for in good truth his educational views are anything but systematical. They are to be found partly in the essay *On Pedantry* (i. 24), partly in that *On the Affection of Fathers to Children* (ii. 8), but chiefly in the essay entitled *On the Education of Children* (i. 25), and addressed to Diane de Foix, Comtesse de Gurson. And in this essay, it should be observed, Montaigne is specially concerned with the education of an individual, and of an individual of a particular class (he was not by the way actually in existence, but he was shortly expected, for, "You are too noble," gallantly says Montaigne to the Countess, "to begin otherwise than with a male"), of the class of those who, not having to earn their living, are able to pursue learning purely with a view to their own improvement. "Our endeavour," he says, "is to make not a grammarian, or a logician, but a gentleman"; and, "Our child can only give the first fifteen or sixteen years of his life to education; the rest must be spent in action."

But although many of his precepts are addressed to a special class, there is much in the essay that is of general import. Here again the two dominant notes are independence and common sense. At a time when Humanism formed the basis of all education, he dares to say, "Greek and Latin

are beautiful ornaments, but we pay too dear for them." In an age when multifarious learning was the chief object of men's desires he could make the following remarks:

The aim of all our fathers' care and expenditure is but to furnish our heads with learning; of judgment and virtue you hear nothing. Cry out in a crowd of one passer-by, "What a learned man!" and of another, "What a good man!" and all eyes and reverence are turned towards the former. This should not be: a third crier is wanted, to cry, "What heavy heads!" We readily ask, "Does he know Greek or Latin? Does he write in verse or in prose?" but the question whether a man has become better or more sensible, which ought to have been the first, is left to the last. We should ask, who has learnt best, not who has learnt most.

In Montaigne's eyes the object of education is to form a boy's character and prepare him for life, and to fill him not so much with learning as with the desire of learning, "with an honest curiosity for information about everything." This sounds perhaps obvious and commonplace, but the seed which Montaigne sowed three centuries ago has, it must be confessed, fallen too often on stony ground. There are a large number of persons concerned with education at the present day who, if they have equipped a boy with a sufficient stock of learning to enable him to pass an examination, fold their hands and think that they have done all that is needful. To conclude this topic I will quote two aphorisms which Montaigne has left to us: "Every abridgment of a good book is a foolish abridgment"; and, "Learning in one man's hand is a sceptre; in another's a bauble."

In spite of Montaigne's boldness and independence of mental attitude and his complete detachment from traditional opinion, he was in politics a Conservative. There are various conditions of temperament besides stolid inertia which tend to Conservatism. It was the romantic and reverent love of ancient things which made Sir Walter Scott a Conservative; it was

fear of unknown forces which made one of Voltaire; it was scepticism which produced the same result in Pierre Bayle. Now all these causes acted more or less upon Montaigne; he had a genuine love of the past in its poetical and picturesque aspect, he dreaded revolutionary measures, while the liveliness of mind which might have led him to welcome change was tamed by his doubts as to whether the new would be any improvement on the old. "I am not very ready," he says, "to welcome change; for I see in contrary opinions a like weakness."

I have already pointed out in my former paper that he was unhesitatingly for the Catholics as against the Huguenots. It was indeed the only side which a patriot could take, unless from conviction he had embraced the new religion. Partly no doubt from love of ease, but in a large measure from a genuine hatred of intolerance, Montaigne took no active part in the Civil Wars. On the formation of the League it was only to be expected that he should be found on the side of the legitimate monarchy, representing as it did good sense, moderation, and patriotism as against the blind obstinacy, the rancorous zeal, the truckling to Spain and Rome, which guided the counsels of the Leaguers. He belonged in fact to the party of the *Politiques*, as they were called, in the ranks of which were to be found, with the exception of the best Huguenots, all the most enlightened and patriotic spirits in France. The death of Henry III. gave the succession to a man for whom Montaigne had a deep liking and admiration, and no one can have welcomed more gladly than he did the day when Henry of Navarre was firmly seated upon the throne.

It is also a sign of Montaigne's good sense that he speaks in strong terms of the practice of duelling as it was carried on in his day, that is to say with two or even three seconds who were bound to engage with one

another, as well as the principals. Nor are his remarks confined to this particular kind of duelling; he is almost as strongly opposed to duelling altogether. He contrasts it with the tournaments of former days: "It is a less noble practice, in that it has only a private aim; it teaches us to work injury on one another, in violation of the laws and of justice; in whatever form it is carried on, it always produces disastrous results." Duelling still flourishes in France, but at least this can now be said for it, that it does not often produce disastrous results.

The most interesting, and at the same time the most difficult, question that one has to deal with in considering Montaigne's opinions is his general attitude towards human and revealed knowledge, or briefly, his philosophy. Or, to put the question in another form, what was the nature and extent of his scepticism? Pascal, as we know, while he borrowed from him many of his arguments and not a little of his method, looked on him with extreme bitterness as a dangerous enemy to the Christian religion; Sainte-Beuve, endorsing the opinion of Port Royal, believed that the object of his apology for Raimond Sebond was nothing less than under the veil of an assumed scepticism to destroy all transcendental belief. Emerson, in his well-known essay, treats him as the typical representative of scepticism. He uses the word sceptic, however, not in its ordinary meaning, but in its literal one of a considerer, or inquirer. But this use of the word is likely to lead, and probably has led, to misunderstanding; for a great many people are no doubt familiar with the title of the essay, *Montaigne or the Sceptic*, who have never read a line either of the essay or of Montaigne, and scepticism to many means religious disbelief.

Now a sceptic in this sense of the word Montaigne certainly was not. He not only professed but believed himself to be an orthodox Catholic.

At the beginning of the essay *On Prayers* (i. 56) he makes solemn profession of his adhesion to the "Catholic Church, Apostolic and Roman, in which I shall die and in which I was born," and in the same essay he tells us that the Lord's Prayer was the only prayer which he used on every occasion, and that he constantly made the sign of the Cross, even when he yawned. In an earlier essay (i. 26) he expresses his belief in the miracles of the early Church, and inculcates obedience to Church dogmas with the thoroughness of a Newman or a Liddon: "Either we must submit ourselves entirely to the authority of our ecclesiastical government, or we must break with it altogether; it is not for us to settle how much obedience we owe it." Nor were these professions of faith in any way belied by Montaigne's actions. We have seen how he made a pilgrimage to the Casa Santa at Loreto, and in what reverent and perfectly naïve terms he gives an account of it in his journal, a record, be it remembered, not meant for publication. We are told by Etienne Pasquier that on his death-bed, when the priest was in the act of elevating the Host, he sat up as well as he could in his feeble state, with his hands clasped, and in that last act offered up his soul to God.

In the face of all this there are only two possible suppositions; either Montaigne was a gross hypocrite and liar, or he really believed in the Catholic religion and in the Roman form of it. The former supposition is, I venture to say, excluded beyond all doubt by what we know of Montaigne's life and character.

But it has been said by Dean Church, and there is a large measure of truth in the remark, "That Montaigne's views both of life and death are absolutely and entirely unaffected by the fact of his professing to believe the Gospel." How are we to reconcile this with Montaigne's honesty? The answer lies partly in his own words: "Others form man, I give an account

of him. I do not teach, I relate." He does not profess to be a moralist, his business is simply to record his own experiences. The whole essay in which these words occur, *On Repentance* (iii., 2), is in its profound knowledge of human nature and frank sincerity of self-revelation one of the most remarkable of the whole book; and it is also the one which best represents Montaigne's attitude towards Christianity in its bearing on practical life. He belongs, he tells us, to the class of men to whom vice is hateful, but who give way to indulgence in it whenever the pleasure or other advantage seems to them greatly to outweigh the sin. Further he admits that he finds it very difficult to believe in repentance for those sins which we commit frequently and deliberately, sins, as he calls them, of temperament. Our virtues and our vices, he says, are born with us; we may keep them out of sight, but we cannot eradicate them. It is absurd to talk of growing better as you grow older; the repentance which old age brings is merely an accident arising from our blunted appetites. In fact we are really worse instead of better when we are old, for our will is weaker and has less force to resist temptation.

All this, it must be confessed, however accurately and profoundly it represents the actual experience of a large number of human beings, is thoroughly pagan in tone. Thus on the question which perhaps more than any other divides the Christian from the ordinary man of the world Montaigne is found frankly siding with the latter. "A man cannot alter his character," says Montaigne. "Yes!" replies the Christian, "by the grace of God he can." And this brings us to the real explanation of Montaigne's attitude towards religion. He regarded it, as so many men do, as something apart, as something lying outside the plane of man's daily life; he consequently refused to apply to it the same canons of criticism which he brought

to bear on every department of human knowledge. The critical spirit which, in pursuance of the dominant characteristic of the age, the reformers had applied to the Catholic Church was in his eyes a dangerous experiment. The promiscuous singing of the Psalms by people of all classes, which Marot's and Beza's versions had brought into use; the translation of the Bible into the vulgar tongue; the revelation of the secrets of religion to the ignorant; all this was to him extremely distasteful. Theology and human philosophy were in his eyes two distinct domains, the frequenters of which ought to keep strictly to their own side of the fence. It is this view which is more or less the key-note of the long essay entitled, *An Apology for Raimond Sebond*, the essay which more than any other has earned for Montaigne his reputation as a sceptic, the armoury from which Pascal borrowed most of his weapons, to turn them, as he believed, against the forger of them.

Raimond Sebond was a professor of medicine and theology at Toulouse in the fifteenth century, who wrote a book called *Theologia Naturalis*, the purport of which was to establish the truth of the Christian religion by human and natural reasons. A copy of this book was given by the well-known scholar Pierre Bunel to Montaigne's father, who many years afterwards, not long before his death, ordered his son to translate it into French. The translation was published in 1569. Two classes of objectors, says Montaigne, found fault with the book. The orthodox said that it was useless, for Christianity can only be apprehended by faith, not by the light of human reason; the unbelievers declared that Sebond's arguments were feeble. It was chiefly to meet the objections of this "more malicious and dangerous" class that Montaigne wrote his *Apology*. Sebond's arguments are feeble, he maintains, because human reason is feeble. Beasts are the equal of men; human knowledge is all vanity; ignorant people are as well off as the

learned. Philosophers are no wiser than the rest; look at their contradictions; the only true philosophy is comprised in the motto, *Que scay-je?* Man's conception of God is merely anthropomorphism; we are really in complete ignorance of God's nature. And we are equally ignorant about our own nature, especially about our own soul. See how our opinions contradict one another; and not only public opinion, but human knowledge generally is subject to perpetual change. Men do not even know what they want. Our very senses are untrustworthy. The conclusion is that human nature of itself is vile; Christian faith is therefore a necessity.

Such is briefly and baldly the line of Montaigne's argument. It is evident in the first place that his defence of Sebond is a mere peg on which to hang a tirade against human reason. Secondly it may be noticed that the essay is in one respect very different from any of the others; it is very much longer, nearly three times as long as the longest essay in the Third Book, and five times as long as any of its predecessors. As a natural consequence it is more of a declamation, more of a set exposition than any of the others. Montaigne has seated himself on his favourite hobby-horse and urges him along with evident satisfaction; consequently we find here more of that exaggeration of statement to which he is always liable than we do elsewhere. As usual too, he is rambling and discursive, and much in the essay seems at the present day stale and commonplace. In fact, a great deal of it is a mere *rechauffé* of the Sceptic or Pyrrhonist philosophy as represented in Cicero, or in Sextus Empiricus, of whom a Latin translation by the hand of Henri Estienne had been published in 1562. It may be noticed further that, though Montaigne is virtually engaged in an attack on philosophy, he has not a single reference to any but ancient philosophers. Perhaps he would reply that the philosophy of the Schoolmen being

based upon Church dogmas was not true philosophy; more probably he knew nothing about them, and for him the only philosophy was that of the ancients.

But though we may fairly suppose that Montaigne's pleasure in showing the paces of his favourite steed has betrayed him into a certain amount of exaggeration, there is no doubt that the essay more or less correctly represents his views. The mottoes inscribed on the rafters of his library, still legible at the present day, nearly all refer to the folly and presumption of man, and to the vanity of human life; while on the central beam are the three watchwords of the Pyrrhonist or Sceptic philosophy—Οὐ καταλαμβάνω (I do not apprehend), Ἐπέχω (I reserve judgment), and Οὐδέν ὀρίζω (I define nothing). His well-known motto and device, *Que scay-je ?* and a pair of scales, were adopted by him as best representing the Pyrrhonist's position.

It must be admitted that there was much in the condition of human knowledge in Montaigne's day to impress him with a sense of its instability. The discovery of new lands had revolutionised existing ideas on geography; the medical science of Galen and Hippocrates had been assailed and in a great measure corrected by practical experimenters like Vesalius and Paré; even Aristotle, "the master of those who know," had been rudely shaken on his throne by Ramus. But perhaps what more than anything else lent force to Montaigne's argument was the overthrow of the Ptolemaic astronomy by Copernicus. "What are we to infer from this," asks Montaigne, "except that it ought not to matter to us which theory is the true one? Who knows whether a thousand years hence a third opinion will not upset the two preceding ones?"

Sic volvenda ætas commutat tempora rerum."

Montaigne would have held human knowledge in greater respect had he had more knowledge himself, had his philosophy been based on a deeper

foundation. But he had no adequate conception of what he was attacking; he was unable to estimate the true value of the conquests of human reason, to measure the ground that had been really gained during the march of civilisation. As he often says himself, he was neither a man of profound learning, nor a systematic thinker. He was too indolent to be either, and to this indolence his scepticism was in a great measure due. He delighted in calling up around him an army of doubts, objections, and contradictions, but he had no power, or indeed inclination, to lay the spirits which he had raised. So, to use his own phrase, he rested his head on the "soft pillow" of ignorance, and gave himself up to the repose of the Pyrrhonist ἀραπαξία or mental imperturbability.

But though his philosophy was little more than a reproduction of that of the Greek sceptics, to his contemporaries it came with the charm of almost novelty. Cornelius Agrippa, it is true, had published in 1530 his famous treatise *On the Uncertainty and Vanity of Sciences and Arts*, but it was written in Latin, and appealed to a comparatively small audience. Though the red-hot enthusiasm of the Renaissance was beginning to cool, men had not ceased to believe in the supremacy of the human intellect; they were still before all things Humanists, and fresh conquests both in science and literature seemed to justify their faith. Hitherto the spirit of free inquiry had been directed solely against traditional dogma; it had not occurred to men that it might be turned against human knowledge itself. One generation had successfully protested against the right of the Church to fetter human inquiry; another generation was beginning to resist the authority of Greek thought which had been set up in place of the Church. But Montaigne pointed out that if there is to be no central authority in science, if free inquiry is to be unlimited, then human knowledge is reduced to a state of perpetual flux; what we believe to-day we may be called

upon to disbelieve to-morrow. What then is the value of your boasted human knowledge?

In England Montaigne was welcomed with hardly less interest than in France. Florio's translation, published in 1603, was doubtless the result rather than the cause of his popularity. Bacon quotes him by name in his first essay (first published in the edition of 1625), and though nothing can be more different from the brilliant garrulity of the French essayist than the austere conciseness of the English one, it is reasonably certain that but for Montaigne Bacon's essays would never have been written.

But the most interesting question in this connection is the relationship of Shakespeare to Montaigne. As is well known, the lines in *The Tempest* (ii. 1) beginning,

I' the commonwealth I would by contraries
Execute all things,

are a paraphrase of a passage in Florio's translation (i. 30). Another parallel, though far less close, is pointed out by Edward Fitzgerald who compares the passage in *Othello* (iii. 3),

Farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill
trump,
The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing
fife,
The royal banner, and all quality,
Pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious
war!

with Florio (iii. 12): "The courageous and mind-stirring harmony of warlike music, which at once entertaineth with delight and enflameth with longing both your ears and your mind." The famous lines in *Hamlet*,

There's a divinity doth shape our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will,

are, Mr. Henry Morley thinks, inspired by "My consultation doth somewhat roughly hew the matter, and by its first shew lightly consider the same; the main and chief point of the work I am wont to resign to heaven" (iii. 8).

Indeed a book has been published to show that Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet*

in order to avert from his countrymen the blighting influence of Montaigne's philosophy, and that the character of Hamlet is a close copy of Montaigne. As might be expected the author of this ingenious theory finds a great many parallels between the two writers which an unprejudiced mind would fail to recognise. But some of his instances are indisputable. Thus part of Hamlet's famous monologue is chiefly, as he says, modelled on the speech of Socrates before his judges, part of which runs thus in Florio's version: "If it be a consummation of one's being, it is also an amendment and entrance into a long and quiet night. We find nothing so sweet in life as a quiet rest and gentle sleep, and without dreams" (iii. 12).¹ Indeed the whole speech is strongly suggestive of Montaigne, with whom death was a favourite subject for reflection. Again the lines spoken by Laertes to Ophelia,

For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews and bulk, but, as this temple
waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal,

are evidently suggested by Florio's rendering of a passage of Lucretius quoted by Montaigne in the *Apology of Raimond Sebond*. Moreover there are one or two less close parallels which have not been noticed by Mr. Feis, such as Hamlet's speech, in the scene with the Queen, about "That monster, custom," compared with Montaigne *On Custom* (i. 22), and "Use every man after his desert and who shall escape whipping?" with Montaigne's "Every man deserves hanging ten times in his life." So too the King's speech beginning, "O my offence is rank" is a striking commentary on Montaigne's remark in the essay *On Prayers* (i. 56) that, "A true prayer and a religious reconciliation of ourselves with God are impossible to a soul that is impure and under the domination of Satan."

¹ Comp. also the essay entitled *That to Philosophise is to Learn how to Die*. (i. 19).

It should be noticed that in all the instances in which the parallelism is of words as well as of thought the passage in *Hamlet* does not occur in the first quarto, but only in the second quarto, published in 1604, the year after Florio's translation. But Shakespeare was doubtless well acquainted with Montaigne's book before this, having read it either in the original or in the translation while still in manuscript.¹ It is also not

¹ Florio's translation was entered at Stationers' Hall in 1599. The first quarto of *Hamlet* was published in 1603; it was first acted probably in 1602.

improbable that in creating the character of Hamlet he may have thought of the man who says of himself: "The uncertainty of my judgment is in most occurrences so signally balanced that I would willingly commit it to the decision of chance and the dice." But of one thing at least we may be sure, that in no sort of way was *Hamlet* intended to be a refutation of Montaigne. To Shakespeare Montaigne's book must have been supremely interesting as a revelation of character; and that is after all its chief interest for us.

ARTHUR TILLEY.

THE FORCES OF DISORDER.

It is interesting to note how the evolution of political events and of social questions brings to the front from time to time certain types of men who appear about to play a considerable part in forming the future history of our country. Take, for instance, the atheist of the period. Not the reflective, educated man in independent circumstances who in his West-end club usually frequents the library where he reads comfortably in his easy-chair. Genial among his friends, if rather reserved in expressing his opinions and never thrusting them offensively on others, a good husband, an affectionate father, an excellent citizen, honest in his convictions, however mistaken they may be or pernicious if generally accepted, he is the representative of a class in the upper circles neither numerous nor powerful, and in the religious sense sincerely believing in nothing.

No,—the man of whom we are now about to speak inhabits regions further east in London. He, on the contrary, is the type of a rapidly increasing order which indeed is at present very conspicuous in the large centres of population in Europe and America; he is by no means reserved, he has begun to speak loud, and is going to speak louder still. Thomas Jones is a modern London artisan, half educated and in intelligence somewhat above the average of his fellows. Let us suppose him about eight and twenty: he has been several years married, as are usually men of his station at that age, nor does he see anything imprudent or improvident in his early alliance; and since manhood he has belonged to an East-end Radical club at which he frequently speaks. His ideas of religion are gathered from a strictly secularist journal which sedu-

lously propagates atheism, and has made him a confirmed atheist; his conceptions of politics from the dogmas uttered by obscure imitators of Burns, Tillet, & Co., who lecture at workmen's gatherings and in Hyde Park on Sundays; his notions of society are taken from publications such as the *Mysteries of London* and certain prints which, circulating freely among the lower classes, describe with virtuous indignation, and at the same time great attention to detail, the occasional scandals which are supposed to illustrate everyday life in the upper circles. In his own way he is sincere in his convictions. As in the case of others he has been moulded by his surroundings, and from early childhood they have been vulgar, ugly, and commonplace, with in addition one very special tendency. That is to say, it has been instilled into him that the rich, the well-to-do, those whom his class rather vaguely term aristocrats, are unprincipled, greedy, domineering, and dishonest; that they are worthless drones whose very existence is an anomaly and a wrong, whose positions of ease and luxury are founded on his life of toil, sometimes of struggling penury. Moreover that while the rich enjoy in idleness the results of his labour, they look down on him as a being of inferior order with whom it would be unfit to associate, yet that at the same time they take their stand on a social pedestal of wealth, birth, talent, or rank, to the summit of which he can never attain. But at the base of that pedestal to-day stands Democracy in ever-increasing crowds, always envious, but now sullen, discontented, impatient and working itself into a frame of mind highly pregnant with danger to certain orders of things.

Let us imagine that on a certain

half-holiday Thomas Jones, our atheistical artisan, makes his way to Hyde Park. It is early June and the height of the London season; Nature is as beautiful as she can be in the locality, and society is there gathered in its most bright and joyous mood. As the young man strolls under the park trees, the air is balmy, the summer sun brightens the rich green foliage and glances on the gay colours of the passing crowd. While leaning against the railings of Rotten Row he sees fitting by groups of handsome, happy English girls, well-bred, well-dressed, and well-mounted. Now a young patrician approaches one of the groups, and there is a pause for a few minutes' conversation; kind looks from sweet and pretty faces are bent on him, a few words of greeting, a laugh, and the party passes on. Jones notices how free from care or sorrow are all these faces. They seem almost as high above him, as much beyond his ken, as angels might be compared to ordinary mortals, were they condescendingly to visit this planet. All around there is whatever of æsthetic influence wealth can give: there are ease and contentment, there are youth, beauty, love, pleasure; and Jones, feeling himself for the time almost an outcast, sees before his eyes a social paradise peopled by beings in whose society he can never mingle, enjoying pleasures which he can never share.

The shadows of the trees are now lengthening, evening approaches, and the workman turns towards home, the streets by degrees becoming narrower and more dreary as he gets eastward into the realms of squalor and struggle. Formerly those in the ranks of poverty entertained a sort of contentment with things as they were, owing to a vague belief that in the after life the poor would have a kind of claim for eternal bliss, and there was somewhat of complacency in the thought that the possession of riches did not conduce to future happiness, rather tending indeed the other way. Now however the flood-gates of literature have been thrown

open and the surging torrent carrying along with it its thousand influences for good and evil is sweeping through and permeating the masses, resistless in its course and impossible to check, while it works blindly, governing the intelligence and directing the attention of uneducated English thought. Our imaginary representative of labour finds now no solace in the old belief. "If it is all over with every one after death," he ponders, "why should some classes, who never work, have all the joy of life, and others who do, have all the discomfort and misery? Why should the accident of birth give them an existence such as I have seen to-day and make me a weary, every-day worker? It's all beer and skittles for these aristocrats and nothing but labour for us, the drudges and slaves of society," he muses, recollecting some of the phrases he has heard at Radical meetings and garnishing his reflections with choice expletives peculiar to his class. So he wanders homewards, thinking of his dreary career without sunshine, tone, or colour; sullen and discontented, feeling at war with society, and even wishing for active hostilities.

At last he arrives at a narrow court where is his domicile consisting possibly of a single room, and fortunate he is if he and his family have not to share it with other tenants. The chamber, lit by small windows, is dark and pervaded by a close, damp smell suggestive of the family washing being done at home. The wife, a lean, pale-faced woman bears little traces of any good looks she may ever have possessed; of womanly softness or grace she has none. The children are unkempt, dirty, unwholesome, and as the husband approaches he perceives, without being at all shocked at the discovery, that their mother has been drinking. The dragged female can be somewhat of a termagant if seriously crossed, and would be truly formidable were it not that Jones' idea of settling matrimonial differences is to give Mrs. Jones a sound thrashing, a remedy he

has more than once administered when he has found his helpmate more than usually aggravating. Among such surroundings where is there privacy or retirement? Where is there opportunity for study or culture? Is it wonderful that the man seeks a refuge in the nearest beer-shop? To it accordingly he now repairs, to get savage over his grievances, to exchange sentiments with others of his class, and then to the Radical club later on.

The type of man we have described only hears one side of the question, nor does he care to hear any other. At war with the existing order of things, he does not reflect that society never obliged him to marry or bring children into the world before he could comfortably support a wife and family; he does not remember that large classes above him as to means and position, with a forethought which he was too self-indulgent to employ, postpone marriage until a competence is fairly secured. Nor does he know that the working man has better opportunities and greater facilities for rising in the social scale in England than in any country in Europe. Also that average intelligence combined with good conduct, temperance, industry and thrift will in most cases place him in a position far higher than that in which he was born. Unacquainted with the principles of political economy, he does not see that in proportion as the price of labour is artificially raised the price of the article produced is also raised to the detriment of the consumers, the great bulk of whom themselves belong to the working and poorer classes. Nor is it apparent to the mental vision of Thomas Jones that were the wages of work to be heightened much beyond its market-value at home, the productive industries of England would take wings and fly to other lands, where cheap labour would result in successful competition, tending seriously to depress the manufactures of Great Britain and eventually place the British working man in a much worse position than

that which he at present occupies. He does not see that as long as brain-power and physical force are unequally distributed by Nature's laws, as long as the principle of chance intermingles with the affairs of men, so long will society evolve from its own elements, in some shape and under certain designations, an aristocracy and a democracy. So long also will there be, as a lowest stratum of all, a residuum composed of the thriftless and incompetent, the intellectually feeble, the beggar, the idler, and perhaps for all time, the criminal!

When Thomas Jones, working man and atheist, while leaning against the park railings saw with envious eyes the glittering throng of fashion and beauty rolling by, he no doubt meditated that a victory over such antagonists would be an easy matter; but he was mistaken, and for this reason. Thomas Jones, the socialist, will not have to fight only the noble and the landlord, the banker and the merchant; he must also fight the house-owner, the small capitalist, the shopkeeper, the annuitant, and the city clerk. As a matter of fact, the latter has proved himself to be highly conservative, especially after having laid by some small savings, besides which there is behind these classes a certain vast nondescript body known as the investing public, and all combined, if they were but really combined, could laugh at socialistic threats against property. In truth property has never put forth its full strength, because property has never been so seriously menaced as to feel real alarm; but were actual danger to arise from any socialist, anarchical, or kindred source, the powerful but dormant forces of wealth would speedily unite, organise, and make short work of any movement towards public plunder. For the above reasons it might be premature to consider that property in general is for the present in danger; but can the same be said of every kind of property?

Whether man be found living under

primitive conditions in the tribal state, or in more settled communities subject to the different forms of heathen belief, or under our complicated system of modern civilisation, men of the most opposite racial varieties, professing the most diverse creeds, always display, and always have displayed, in their dealings with each other a paramount instinct which has ever shaped the conduct of the human race. One prominent point stands out clear and unmistakable, invariable as the laws of Nature herself; the history of the world has always proclaimed the same principle that individual rights are nothing more than so many collections of mights, that power always finds justification for taking what power can confer, and that communities which are feeble but wealthy do not permanently retain their wealth in the presence of communities which are powerful but poor.

The present voting power of the British Isles consists of something more than six millions of individuals, about three-fourths of whom are working men, the majority as a rule possessed of no real property, but whose capital lies in their brains and muscles, chiefly in the latter. English democracy is mainly Nonconformist, strongly leavened with atheism; the most influential of its leaders are more or less outspoken atheists, and these men are now questioning rights hitherto deemed sacred and inviolable, among others, for instance, the title to ownership of the soil.

Land is very distinct from all other descriptions of wealth and very unfortunately situated. It is not portable, nor easily transferable; it is encumbered by jointures, family settlements, entails, and testamentary provisions; it is in the hands of a few, but coveted by many. It seems to be therefore the landed proprietors and head landlords of the towns who are bound in their own interests to consider if a dam to stem this torrent can still be created, and by what means.

It may be said and believed by many that however constituted the Parliament of the future may be, democracy triumphant and holding the reins of power, would still be strictly fair, that it would respect the rights of all classes, that the natural sense of justice, added to the respect for the rights of property, which constitute at the same time the foundation of civilised communities and the bond which holds them together, would be a safeguard against a policy of confiscation or anything approaching to it. We rather think there is a fallacy in the above theories, and that they could be blown away like froth before the evidence of history.

In the beginning of the year 1788 how many among the seigneurs or landlords of France, numbering some hundred and fifty thousand, saw their estates in danger? If the events about to take place within five years had been publicly foretold by any one gifted with more than ordinary foresight, would not his statements have been met with a general laugh of incredulity in which even the twenty millions of the unprivileged classes forming democratic France would have joined? Yet before two years were out, the preliminary gambols of the newborn democracy were manifested by the peasantry first making a holocaust of the landlords' game and then burning their houses. When Rousseau brought out his *Contrat Social* the seigneurs laughed it to scorn; but thirty years had hardly passed when French democracy offered up certain of those very seigneurs on the altar of French liberty, and then copies of Rousseau's book were bound in vellum prepared from the skins of the victims, a fact highly significant but also very French. And the patricians of France, those who had escaped assassination or the guillotine, where were they? Ruined, homeless, destitute, and in exile, they were earning their daily bread by daily drudgery in a foreign land.

One year before the outbreak of the American Civil War the Southern

planters, making due allowance for certain climatic and social conditions, were living in a manner much the same as that followed by the well-to-do English landlord on his estate. Few at that time discerned the stupendous calamities which overshadowed them, and none seemed to have thought that their landed property was in danger of being alienated. But before five years had passed these men were crushed and ruined; for although the word confiscation was not applied to the manner in which they lost their estates, they did lose them under a most democratic form of government founded on manhood suffrage. And it should also be remarked that the vanquished class were brought down from affluence and comfort to a state of abject poverty, owing to the system of unblushing official robbery to which they were subjected by that government for some years after the conclusion of the war.

The year before the introduction of Mr. Gladstone's first Land Bill the Irish proprietors, as a body, appeared to show by their indifference to the coming measure that they considered themselves at least as secure in their position as the English landlords now do in theirs. And indeed they had some grounds for confidence. It was felt to be contrary to what Disraeli once called "the sublime instincts of an ancient people," meaning thereby the English people and their government, that interests vested in such a tangible description of property as land should be seriously affected. During the period of Mr. Gladstone's renewed Irish Land Legislation, that gentleman distinctly intimated that should the property of the landlords become in consequence depreciated in value, they would have a just claim for compensation, (Speech in the House of Commons, 22nd July, 1881). He also argued that if, in consequence of his measures, the income of the landlords should be diminished, on the other hand they would gain by having greater security for the receipt of their

lowered rents. Now, let us see in what way these assurances have been fulfilled. Legislation has transformed the owners of the soil into mere rent-chargers on much diminished incomes, without their having even the ordinary rent-chargers' security for the payments of their rents. The Irish rental has been reduced from £12,000,000 net to a nominal £8,000,000; we say nominal, for the landlord is frequently obliged to give large reductions on even judicial rents in order to secure any payment whatever. They have thus been deprived of an annual income which, if capitalised, would amount to the enormous sum of £120,000,000 sterling. They have been deprived of their territorial power, and the selling value of their property has been greatly lowered. The tenant, moreover, is now permitted to sell the goodwill of his landlord's property to the highest bidder, putting the whole of the purchase-money in his own pocket, and selling for his own benefit not only his own improvements, but his landlord's also. Nor did the injustice even end here. While the landlords were surrounded by legislation with such difficulties in the recovery of their rents, that the majority found it next to impossible to exert their legal rights against any combined opposition on the part of the tenants, they were obliged by law still to pay interest on loans and mortgages contracted at a time when the owner had full possession of his property, and they have also to pay the usual government taxes and local imposts, such as income-tax, poor-rates, tithe-rent-charge, county-cess, head rent, quit-rent, &c., under pain of losing the little which was left to them in default of payment. Thus, while the legislature fenced the tenant round on every side with protection in his newly acquired rights, it not only stripped the landlord of a considerable proportion of his income, but rendered it very difficult for him to obtain the remainder. One would think that such a result might have been easily foreseen.

At a time of profound peace, under a settled government, and in a country of enormous wealth, an Act was passed, levelled at a body of loyal and peaceful citizens which can only be described as one of sheer confiscation. One class was spoiled without receiving a penny of compensation, in order to enrich another. The measure in itself may have been right and desirable, but to carry it out at the expense of certain private individuals instead of at the expense of the State, and to do this without a shadow of excuse from imminent public danger or financial embarrassment, was simply to endorse the teaching of the agitators, that the Irish landlords had no right to their property. The Irish tenant henceforth considered that he had the sanction of the State for making every attack in his power on what remained of the landlord's income. He proceeded to do it, with what results we know; and how Mr. Gladstone's assurances were fulfilled, we also know.

But the full and lamentable effects of this legislation have never been generally realised in England, and for this reason. The sufferers belong to a class who above all others shrink from anything like an appeal to public sympathy, and therefore among them there was neither clamour for relief, nor parading of grievances. What they asked for, and thought that they had a right to expect, was that, as on an average about one-third had been taken off their incomes by the action of Government, they should at least be made secure in the receipt of the remainder. For this the State was distinctly answerable; and the amount required should have come out of taxes if it could not be collected in rents. Now, the true position of the Irish landlord was not only that his rents had been cut down by the decrees of the Land Commission, it was that over a large extent of the country owing to the operation of the Plan of Campaign, sustained as it was by the system of Boycotting, he could get no rent whatever in some cases, and in others

he could only receive it by allowing his tenantry and the local Land League to fix whatever amount they thought fit to pay, and to wipe off whatever arrears they chose. After the rebellion of 1798, the Government compensated loyal men for losses sustained during that period of lawlessness. But after the veiled rebellion of the last few years, although the Government had itself intervened to cripple the landlords in their powers and their resources, no compensation was thought of. In such a state of things the Irish landlords, deserted by the Government, surrounded by a hostile population, and exposed on any attempt to assert their rights to the powerful weapon of Boycotting, were brought face to face with actual bankruptcy, and many sank into destitution. The blow, however, fell with the most terrible effect on an unfortunate class, who, though not actual landowners, drew their incomes from land. These persons were chargeants of various kinds, mortgagees, the holders of jointures, etc. Many of the above were ladies with families depending on them, many were advanced in years, others were absolutely unable to work owing to failing health. Irish ladies of good social position, and once in possession of regularly paid incomes, were suddenly confronted by absolute ruin, and their relations or friends, who might otherwise have helped them, being in much the same condition, they found themselves houseless, penniless, and starving. Some hid themselves in garrets and cellars, where in bitter want they endured cold and hunger; some tried to sustain life by needlework; others, under assumed names, found a refuge in the workhouse, a society among workhouse beggars, and a last refuge in the pauper's grave. Nor was this all. It is a fact that in the asylum of the poorhouse were found Irish ladies for whom the appalling nature of such a change in the conditions of life had proved too much: the shock of misfortune had vanquished reason; and, perhaps we

should say mercifully, they no longer knew what they had been or what they were.

It is not to be supposed, and we do not suppose, that when Mr. Gladstone made the speeches to which we have referred, he deliberately tried to deceive the Irish landlords, or that he anticipated the ruin to which they were destined. At the same time we consider certain questions may fairly be asked. Did the British nation through its chosen representative give certain pledges to the landlords? Have those pledges been redeemed? Has the property of certain loyal citizens been confiscated without compensation? If these questions must be answered in the affirmative, we would now ask, have the English people shown themselves true to the characteristics of their race? Where is the evidence of the sublime instincts which Disraeli admired so much or of the English sense of justice and fair play? Is it in fact true, or not true, that loyal British subjects were subjected to spoliation, and reduced to ruin, for no other reason than because they were too feeble to defend themselves?

We have dealt in detail with this painful subject because it is our desire to portray distinctly the treatment which a certain class has met with from the English democracy, there being to all intents and purposes no difference in race or religion between the spoilers and the spoiled. We think also that on this point there are certain facts which must be carefully weighed and considered. For instance, it is now incontestable that English democracy is fast pushing its way to political power, the old balance of parties has changed, and its centre has moved considerably to the left. This question must therefore present itself to the English and Scotch landholders; are they justified in supposing that they will meet with much gentler treatment during the arrangement of certain land-measures which the Radical party now propose, than was

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accorded to their fellow landlords and kinsmen in Ireland?

The English resident landlord on his country estate has made himself deservedly popular. This fact, however, as the last few years' elections show, does not prevent the working man's vote going against him, at all events to a very considerable extent. In the cities and towns this feeling is naturally much more intense. Being completely out of touch, and by no means in sympathy with the landlord, he feels to him much as the orthodox Spaniard felt four hundred years ago to the Spanish Israelite, when in 1492 he gave his Semitic countryman a very peremptory order to leave the country at four months' notice, accompanied by another very peremptory order to leave his gold and silver behind him.

The present drift of political events therefore indicates that a future House of Commons may contain a majority of members returned by working men, representatives of a vast industrial voting-power possessing little either of wealth or land, while other interests, which have most of the wealth and the bulk of the land, are in a powerless and hopeless minority.

From the days of the Greek and Roman Republics until now a marked difference has always manifested itself between legislative assemblies constituted by a mere popular vote and those independent of it. The former are much more likely to be hurried away by sudden and vehement gusts of passion and feeling; they want calmness of deliberation, are wanting also in a sense of responsibility, and are less likely than the latter to consider impartially the rights of minorities, or the various remote issues often involved. It is therefore extremely probable that a working-man's Parliament would be very much disposed to enact measures not only hasty and ill-considered, but also one-sided, and eventually in a national point of view disastrous.

"We will whittle away at the landlord's property until there is nothing

left to whittle." Such were the words of an Irish agitator when dealing with the land-question in a speech which had at all events the merit of frankness. This policy was carried out and has been to a large extent successful, so much so indeed that it will be continued in any future agitation against the system of land-tenure in this country. We do not consider as a matter of fact that any very sweeping measure would be successfully carried through in a session, but an invasion of proprietary rights might be effected by gradual steps all tending in the same direction. For instance, the present law of trespass on private property might be altered, the right to preserve game might be cancelled, an allotment-bill much more in favour of the aspiring owner than the present Act might be carried; all these measures would certainly tend to drive the landlord from his estate; a residence in London or on the Continent might have by degrees more allurements for the class, and absenteeism would become very frequent.

Up to the present time the presence of the English country gentleman has with rare exceptions been an important and beneficial factor in country life. Upright, honourable, and straightforward in his dealings, genial and kindly to those with whom he comes into contact, he as a rule gains their respect and esteem. A good type of a well-bred Englishman, his house is usually a centre of culture and refinement from which radiate through other strata of society influences tending to bring out the best points of the national character. Would it be well for rural England that this class should be driven from its present position, and that the ancient manor-houses of our country should be tenanted by caretakers instead of by the squires' families? Yet this is what would happen in certain contingencies; for once take away the attractions of a country life, and the halls of the landlords would speedily be deserted. How and where the

change would benefit the masses, we do not see; but we do see very clearly how disastrously it would, in the long run, affect the working democrat himself.

The English land-holder holds some very strong cards in his hands if he only knew how to play them, and if, taking experience as his guide, he would be warned by the errors and avoid the fate of the Irish landlords. He may put forth as his programme something of this kind. "If the voting power and the general voice of the nation should indeed decide it to be expedient that our inheritance should change hands, be it so; but on what principle of justice or expediency can the landlord's property pass from those who have purchased it or who have fairly inherited it, into the hands of the tenants who have done neither and who have no title whatever to it? If there is to be some gradual legislative process equivalent to confiscation but veiled under some other name to save appearances, let that legislation tend to throw the property into the hands of the State and not into the hands of individuals. Should private ownership in land be indeed an evil, then the evil is multiplied and perpetuated by creating many proprietors instead of a few, and the condition of the non-holders of land would remain assuredly not better than before." Were a firm attitude assumed on this point by the landed proprietors as a class it would throw the great body of the tenant-farmers on their side, more especially as the latter are as a rule well contented with their position and their instincts are already against socialism. There was sense in the Roman adage, *Divide et impera*, and were the land-owners to bear it in mind they might strengthen their own position while disintegrating the forces of their enemy. Again, the landlord may say: "If I am to be made the victim of public plunder, and by some process, call it what you will, my property is to go to the State, why should the

principle be applied to my property only? Must it not eventually come to be applied to house-properties in cities and towns?" Here he would argue most justly; and be it remembered the victim threatened will not be only the owner of blocks of houses in wealthy districts, he will be also the small speculator, the representative of a great mass who have employed their moderate savings, often the result of a life's labour, in buying a small plot of land and building thereon a few houses; this process forming by degrees most of our country towns and villages. Moreover, if the owner of land and the town-landlord are to be plundered, most assuredly the principle would shortly after be applied to the owner of mines, who at present holds this species of property by the same title as that by which the land-holder holds his land. "Confiscate if you will," the landlord may say; "but be assured that once commencing with me and mine this peculiar system of legislation will not end there, and the question must eventually arise, 'Where will it end? Who is safe?'"

It is a great mistake to suppose that the security of landed property is a matter which concerns only landlords. It does not indeed much concern the artisan, but it deeply concerns all the classes which invest money in great or small amounts, from the millionaire down to the country shopkeeper. Not only have

private individuals, usually of the middle and lower classes, largely invested in mortgages on landed property, but this has always been a favourite security with Insurance Companies and similar undertakings, in whose prosperity hundreds of thousands, for the most part also belonging to the middle and lower classes, are interested. Were the rights of property in English land to be invaded by an agitation such as has been so terribly successful in Ireland, the movement would be fraught with the direst consequences to many who have never owned and do not wish to own a foot of soil.

In Ireland the land-holding class, few, feeble, and betrayed by the government to which they looked for the maintenance of the rights of property, have mostly suffered in silence and unmarked. But in England it will be very different, and the first serious menace to the rights of property in general will awaken a host of defenders from the midst of the English democracy itself. It seems, then, that the landed interest is still potentially a great factor in the State; but it should organise its strength and marshal its forces, bringing into harmony with itself the multiplicity of disjointed interests which indirectly belong to it. It is menaced by danger; but the danger might disappear before consolidation and union, if effected in time.

C. R.

THE BHUT-BABY.

"ACCORDING to established precedent it is reported, under section so-and-so, that one Buddha Singh of Kidderjana having died, his rightful heirs inherit." The court-reader's voice hurried the liquid Urdu syllables into long, sleepy cadences like the drone of a humble-bee entangled in the swaying punkah overhead. Backwards and forwards, rising and falling, the rhythm seemed to become part of me, until the colourless reports were a monotonous lullaby, and each wave of sound and motion bore me further from earth, nearer to the land of dreams. Ah! if the right people always inherited, and my old uncle received ticket-of-leave from the gout, I might afford furlough, and stand once more on that big boulder at the foot of the One-stone pool waiting for a new ring of light to show on the dark eddy by the far side; a ring with a swirl and a gleam of silver scales in the centre, a tightening line under the finger, till the reel went whirr-rr-rr-rr! It was a lovely dream while it lasted.

"According to established precedent the canal-officer reports, under section so-and-so, that certain rebellious persons in Chori-pani have opened the sluices of the cut, and taken water that did not belong to them." The leather-sweet breeze off the One-stone pool ceased to blow, and I was back, with the punkah, in the humanity-laden atmosphere of the court-house, where even the mosquitoes were glutted, and the lizards, hanging head downwards on the wall, looked as if they had congestion of the brain. Stealing water! Poor wretches, who could blame them with their crops withering in the June sun and the sluice-doors within reach? Even a juicy apple on a hot day is irresistible,

despite Farmer Smith's big dog watching from below, while you sit on the lower branch, and Jerry sits on the upper, eating all the ripe fruit just to pass the time, and thanking Providence meanwhile for making you Christian children in a cider-country!

"According to established precedent it is reported, under section so-and-so, that the devil was born three days ago in village Hairan-wallah. Orders are requested. Meanwhile the *chowkidar* [watchman] remains watching the same." Startled into wakefulness I looked sharply to see if the reader had not been nodding in his turn; but my alertness merely produced a respectful iteration of the paragraph which showed all too clearly my subordinate's explanation of the sudden display of attention.

The suspicion of sleep is always irritating. "*Sarishtadar!*" [clerk of the court] I began in English, "what the devil?" "Nossir," interrupted the reader suavely in the same language, "pardon the suggestion, sir, but *the* devil is somewhat free translation, sir. In dictionary *bhut* (the word used, sir,) equals an *indefinite* devil, thus *a* devil, *a* fiend, *a* imp—pardon the indiscretion, sir! an imp."

A glow of proud humility at his own quick detection of these trivial errors filled up the pause which followed, while the punkah went on swinging and I sate wondering if I were asleep or awake. Finally the *sarishtadar* dipped his pen in the ink, fluttered the superfluous moisture on the carpet, and suggested deferentially that the *chowkidar* was waiting for orders. A sudden curiosity as to what his self-complacent brain, surcharged with Western culture, would do with the situation made me reply curtly, "The usual orders."

I managed to forbear laughing in the grave face raised to mine in deprecating apology. "I am unable, sir," he said after a pause, "to recall, at the present moment, any section, penal or civil, suitable to occasion. Would you kindly jog memory, sir, by suggesting if it is under judicial or administrative heads? Or perhaps," he added, as a bright after-thought, "it is political job." Then, I regret to say, I went off into yells of unseemly mirth, as most Englishmen have to do at times over the portentous solemnity of the Aryan brother.

There was a stir in the verandah, a sudden waking to renewed effort on the part of the punkah-coolie resulting in a general breeziness. Or was it that Terence O'Reilly, our young Irish doctor, as he came in to the darkened court, brought with him a thought of fresh air, a remembrance of Nature in her sunniest, most lovable moods? He invariably suggested such things to me at any rate, and as he paused in astonishment at my indecorous occupation, I thought once more that it was a pleasure simply to look at him. His face sympathised promptly with the unknown joke. "Whwhat the divvle are ye laughing at,—me?" he asked in a rich brogue as he seated himself astride a chair; in which equestrian position his dandy costume for polo showed to great advantage.

Nero fiddling over the flames of Rome is sympathy itself compared to the indifference with which we often speak the first lines of a coming tragedy in every-day life. So it was with a jest that I introduced Terence O'Reilly to the existence of the *bhut*-baby, and in so doing became instantly aware that he surpassed me in other things besides good looks. He could scarcely be said to become grave, for to lose brightness would have been to lose the essence of the man, but his expression grew to a still more vivid reflex of his mind. "Twill be one of those poor little craytures that come into this worrld God knows why," he said with an in-

finite tenderness of voice. "Ten to wan 'tis better it should die, fifty to wan I can do nothing to help it, but I'll ride over and see annyhow."

The *sarishtadar* laid aside his pen somewhat mournfully, the practical being out of his line; while I, smitten by admiration into immediate regret at my own indifference, murmured something about having thought of going over next morning.

"There's no time loike the present, my dear fellow," he replied buoyantly. "The pony's at the door, and sure I'm got up for riding annyhow;" and as he spoke he stretched out his long legs, and surveyed their immaculate boots and breeches critically.

"And what will your team do without their best forward?" I asked, feeling a certain captiousness at his prompt decision.

"Get along with your blarney! Sure it's practising, and you can take my place at that anny day; indeed 'twas to fetch you I ventured into the dock, for whin I caught a glimpse of your face at the jail this morning I said to meself, 'Terence, me bhoy, that's a case of polo, or blue pill, for by the powers his liver's not acting.' So 'twas to hound you into exercise I came annyhow."

A feverish desire to amend and excuse my own lukewarmness shot up through the loophole his words afforded. "To tell the truth I *was* feeling a bit slack; but if you'll wait five minutes while I slip over to the bungalow and change my clothes, I'll ride with you to Hairanwallah. It will be better for me than polo; I might get over-heated, you know."

"'Tis over-eating, not over-heating that's the matter with you, me bhoy," he replied coolly; "but I'm proud,—and by the powers!" he added, starting up in great excitement, "you shall ride my pony; I call him Blue Pill, for he's better than wan anny day; and while you're dressing I'll send me *syce* round for the Lily of Killarney. I've a bet on her at the *gymkhana* next Monday, and we'll try her on the quiet against the stable."

Half an hour afterwards I was enjoying plenteous exercise, and it seemed to me far behind as if the Lily, a great black beast without a single white hair on her, was trying to buck Terence over into the saffron-coloured horizon, as she went along in a series of wild bounds. He came back to me, however, after a time, as fresh as paint; but the mare with head down and heaving flanks appeared to have had enough of it.

"'Tis a pity the faymale sex is so narvous," he said casually. "Ye can't hold 'em responsible for annything; but if it wasn't for hysteria they'd be angels entirely. She has the paces of wan, annyhow."

Fourteen miles of constant canal-cuts, that were a perpetual joy to the doctor and a terror to me, brought us to Hairan-wallah, a large village standing among irrigated fields. Here cautious inquiries for the devil led us to a cluster of mud huts beyond the pale, where the low-caste servants of the community dwelt apart. Before reaching it we were joined by the head-men and their followers all anxious to explain and excuse the calamity which had befallen their reputation; but as the fear of evil eye had prevented any of them from personally inspecting the fiend, the accounts of its appearance were wildly conflicting. The doctor, indeed, refused to listen to them, on the ground that it was sheer waste of time, and rode along affably discussing the crops with an aged patriarch. His manner changed, however, when we were requested to dismount, and he led the way into the enclosure where, guarded by the police *chowkidar*, the devil-baby lay awaiting Government orders. The court-yard was hung round with coloured threads, old iron, and other devices against witchcraft, and a group of low-caste men and women were huddled up dejectedly in one corner. So far the crowd followed us, but when some of the reputed relations showed us into a dark out-house at the further end, even curiosity failed to prevent a visible hanging-back.

Blinded by the change from the glare outside I could at first see nothing but my companion's tall form bending over a bundle of rags on a low stool, beside which a half-naked hag sate chanting a guttural charm, and before I regained clearer sight his voice rang out in tones of evident relief, "By the powers! 'tis only a black albino."

The bull was perfect, seeing that it conveyed succinctly a very accurate description. The *bhut*-baby was a black, a very black albino, for the abnormal colouring was confined to its hair, which was unusually well developed and grew in tight clustering curls over its head like a coachman's wig. The faint eyebrows and eyelashes were also white, and the result, if not devilish, was extremely startling. For the rest, it was as fine a man-child as ever came to gladden a mother's heart. I deemed it asleep till I saw the doctor bend closer, and then raise the eye-lid in keen professional scrutiny.

"Where's the mother?" he cried, turning like lightning on the nearest male relative, and seizing him by the scruff of the neck in order to emphasise his words. "Bring her at once, or I'll go inside and fetch her myself. The child has been left to starve," he added rapidly in English, "and it's nigh dead of neglect. You're a magistrate! Make them bring the devil of a mother here at once, or it will die."

But they met my commands and remonstrances with frightened obstinacy, asserting after some hesitation that the mother was dead, had died virtuously of shame at bringing such disgrace to her people. I had every reason to believe this statement was a lie, but no means of proving it to be one, for of course the whole village favoured it.

Then there came to Terence O'Reilly's face a look that was good to see but not to endure. "And if the poor little creature has lost its own mother," he cried in that strong round voice of his, "are there no other women among you all with the

milk of kindness in their breasts that will give it a drink for the sake of the time when they took suck themselves? Look at it! What are you all frightened of? 'Tis as fine a babe as a woman could bear. Only the white hair of it, and God knows we shall all come to that if we are spared. Look at it, I say! Handle it, and see for yourselves!"

Suiting the action to the word he lifted the infant in his arms and carried it out to the lingering light of day, among the crowd which fell back in alarm from him and his burden. He did indeed look somewhat of an avenging angel with his face ablaze with indignant appeal. There was a scuttling from behind as some of the head-men tried to force a sweeper-woman to the front, but ere they succeeded she had promptly gone into hysterics and so roused a murmur of disapprobation and dismay among the rest. Her shrieks brought Terence back to earth, and ceasing to hold the child at arm's length as if offering it for acceptance, he turned to me once more. "At least your magistracy can make them bring me milk. If ye can't even do that, then God help the British rule!"

Stung by the sarcasm I exerted myself to such an extent, that three separate head-men arrived breathless at the same moment with large *lotahs* full of nourishment for the devil, or any one else on whom the Presence was foolish enough to bestow it. So much lay within their conceptions of duty.

The scene which followed will linger in my memory until memory itself ceases to be. Terence in polo-costume seated on a string bed under the darkening skies with the devil on his lap, feeding it methodically with the corner of his pocket-handkerchief moistened in the milk held by three trembling *lambadars*. Beside him the Presence, with, thank God, sufficient vitality left for admiration. And round about a cloud of awe-struck witnesses, wondering at his audacity, doubtful of its effect on the future.

"Sure 'tis the firrst toime I ever did dhry-nurse," he remarked after a long silence, during which I became absorbingly interested in the little imp's growing desire for life. "Hark to that, now! The ungrateful divvle's wanting to cry just becace it's got something to digest, as if that wasn't the firrst duty of a human stomach. Great Moses! don't ye think it's time you stepped in as ripresentative of the Kaiser-i-Hind, and took things in hand a bit? Ah, it's after having dill-water ye are now, is it? Whisht, whisht, whisht now!"

He walked up and down, the crowd swaying from him, as he dandled the infant with what seemed to me marvellous skill, while I did my best to argue sense into the dull brains of the villagers. I was quite unsuccessful, of course, and after many words found myself, as before, with two courses open to me, either to leave the *bhut-baby* where it was, or give it in charge of the head-men; the one a swift, the other a more tardy certainty of death from that mysterious disease called "By the cause of not drinking milk properly" which figures so largely in the records of infant mortality in India; the former for choice, since, as Terence remarked, "It would save trouble to kill it at the beginning instead of the end of its life."

"So the magistracy can do nothing," he said at last; "thin I will. *Chowkidar!* take this baby to the head-quarter's hospital. I'm master there, annyhow, and I'll make it anny case I please, and dye its hair, an' no man shall say me nay!"

So the *chowkidar* was ordered to carry the devil to hospital to be cured of its devilry, and we rode home in frantic haste because Terence was engaged to sing *Killaloe* that evening in barracks. Some of the relations ran about a mile after us yelling out blessings for having removed the curse from them.

Six weeks after I saw an atrocious hag nursing a white-haired infant in the doctor's own compound, and ques-

tioned him on the subject. "The fact is," he said ruefully, "it gave fits to the patients. I tried shaving its head, but it grew so fast and the white eyelashes of it betrayed the cloven hoof. And dye wouldn't stick on; so I've hired a harridan on two rupees a month to look after it under my own eye."

There was, no doubt, something of combativeness in this particular instance of Terence O'Reilly's charity; but the *bhut*-baby was by no means the only pensioner on his bounty. The row of mud houses beyond the cook-room was filled with the halt, the maimed, and the blind; especially the latter, for the fame of his infinite skill and patience as an eye-doctor was spreading far and wide. Besides, he had the secret, possessed by some Englishmen unconsciously, of inspiring the natives with absolutely unbounded devotion, and many of his patients would literally have laid down their lives for him, among others his bearer, a high-caste Brahman. The man, who had originally come to him for blindness of long standing had, on recovery, made his way straight from hospital to the doctor's house and announced his intention of serving him till death. "What are hands, and feet, or brain," he answered calmly to all objections, "if they have not eyes to guide them? Therefore are they all predestined since all time to be servants to my Lord the Light-bringer for ever and ever."

Treated at first as a joke, Shivdeo's determination had outlived opposition, and at the time of the *bhut*-baby's advent he had achieved his intention of becoming trusted personal attendant to the "Light of the World," for, without some such allusion to the benefit he had received at his hands, he never spoke of his master. The introduction of a baby pariah to begin with, and a devil to follow, brought about a temporary disturbance of his office; for he was haughty with all the pride of his race, and superstitious beyond belief. But after a week of

dismissal consequent on failing to provide the harridan with proper milk for the bottle, Shivdeo, almost blind again with fruitless tears, crept back to the Light-Giver's feet and swore a big oath to feed the low-caste demon himself if thereby he might return to the only life he could live. He kept his promise of strict neutrality to the letter, never by word or deed showing his aversion to the child, affecting indeed not to see it with those mild, short-sighted eyes of his. Yet, as it grew older, he must often have been brought into contact with the child, for it would crawl after the doctor like a dog. Despite the peculiarity of its silvery curls and pale blue eyes, it was really pretty, and by the time it was two years old had picked up such a variety of comical tricks and odd ways, that Boots, as we called it, became quite an institution with the doctor's friends. We used to send for it to the verandah and laugh at the silent agility with which it tumbled for sweetmeats and the equally silent quickness of its mimicry, for to all intents and purposes the child was dumb. Beyond a very rare repetition of the feeble wail I had first heard from it in the doctor's arms at Hairanwallah, it made no articulate sound whatever; but once or twice when we tired of it and forgot its presence, I have heard a purring noise like a cat, and looking down, found that the little creature was curled up with its silver curls resting on the doctor's foot in perfect content. He spent many hours in demonstrating its full possession of all five senses, and always declared it would speak in time; certainly if speech went by intelligence it would have been the most eloquent of babies. As it was, its unusual silence undoubtedly added to its uncanny appearance, and helped to strengthen the still lingering belief in its devilish origin. As long, however, as Terence O'Reilly's voice gave the orders for its well-being, not a soul in his compound or elsewhere would have dreamt of disobedience. Indeed it often

struck me that poor little Boots lived by virtue of his exuberant vitality, and by nothing else.

I remember one evening we had been screaming with laughter over the comical little creature's mimicry of Shivdeo's stately short-sighted way of bringing in whisky and soda-water. The applause seemed to get into the baby's brain, and it took us off one after the other with such deadly truth, that we nearly rolled off our chairs. Then some one suggested that we should ask it to imitate Terence, who happened to be absent; and when it failed to respond, a young subaltern, thinking it had not understood, came out with a fair copy of the doctor's round, rich brogue. We were all startled at the result; the child made for the speaker like a wild beast, stopped suddenly, then crept away with silent tears brimming up into its eyes. I think we all felt a bit ashamed, especially when Terence, coming in from a patient, found Boots curled up asleep in a damp corner by the *tattie* and, with a mild rebuke that, "'Twas enough to give the poor little crayture fayver an' ague," lifted the child in his arms, and proceeded to carry it across the garden to its harridan. But he had hardly raised it before Shivdeo, gliding in like a ghost from heaven knows where, came forward and took the child from him with a rapid insistence that left me wondering. So, when the man brought me my parting cheroot, I questioned him on his interference. He looked startled for a moment; then replied gravely that it was not meet for the Light of the Universe to bear a sweeper's child in his bosom. "Nor is it meet for a Brahman either," I returned, feeling sure he had some other reason. The man's eyes flashed before they dropped submissively: "Nor is it meet for a Brahman to serve; but the Presence knows that this slave cares not if he wakes as a dog so that the Lord of Light remains to give sight to the blind."

Shortly after this Boots sickened

for some childish complaint (in the course of which pneumonia developed, making it hover for a day or two between this world and the next. Once more Terence stood between the *bhut*-baby and the shadow of death, and had it been the heir of princes, the resources of modern science could not have been more diligently ransacked for its benefit. Indeed the doctor looked quite worn out when I met him one morning, going, as he said, to give himself a freshener by taking the Lily round the steeple-chase course.

"You're over-working, Terence," said I, noting his fine-drawn clearness of feature; "up all night after Boots (I'm glad to hear the little fellow's better by the way), and Blue Pill waiting for you day after day till after dark at the hospital gates; to say nothing of *gymkhanas*. It won't do for long; I'm serious about it, old chap."

"Are you? Well, it's kind of you to be that," he laughed; "though mayhap 'twould be more of a change for your friends if you were the t'other thing. Don't fret yourself about me, annyhow; I'm well enough. Maybe 'tis having done dhry-nurse to him at first that makes me feel Boots on me mind; but I think he's well through. And d'ye know! the little beggar wouldn't touch a thing unless I gave it him. 'Tis a queer place this worrld, annyhow."

His voice had a suspicion of a break in it, and his eyes were brighter than ever; whence I augured that he felt worse than he cared to confess. Next day he sent a note asking me to inspect the jail for him, as he was going to try conclusions with his liver; the day after I found him in bed, but lively. Then the deadly fever which kills so many fine young fellows in India laid fast hold on him, and for three long weeks we, who loved him, watched the struggle for life, helpless to do aught save keep up his strength as best we might against the coming crisis. It was as if a

calamity had befallen the whole Station. Men when they met each other asked first of all how *he* was ; and women sent jellies and soups enough for a regiment to the bungalow where the young doctor, who had soothed so many of their troubles, lay bravely fighting out his own. Quite a crowd of natives gathered round the gate by early dawn, waiting for news of the past night ; and, so far as I knew, Shivdeo never left the verandah during all those weary days. I could see him from my post by the bed, sitting like a bronze statue against a pillar, whence my slightest sign would rouse him. For I assumed the office of head-nurse after Terence, full of gratitude for the kindly offers of help showered upon him, had said with a wistful gleam of the old mischief, " But I loike your sober face best, old man ; it makes me feel so pious." I sent in for leave that morning and never left him again.

It was the twenty-sixth day, about ten o'clock in the evening, that the doctor in charge shook his head over my patient sorrowfully. " He is terribly weak, but while there's life,— We shall know by dawn."

The old formula fell on my ears, though I had been waiting for it with a sense of sickening failure, and unable to reply, I turned away from the figure which lay so still and lifeless despite all my care. As I did so I noticed Shivdeo listening with eyes and ears at the door. For the last three days the man had been strangely restless, and more than once I had discovered odd things disposed about the room, and even on poor Terence's pillow ; things used as talismans to keep away the evil eye, such as I had seen in Hairan-wallah when the *bhut-baby* was born ; and I had smiled,— good heavens, how ignorant we are in India !—smiled at the silly superstition which evidently lingered in Shivdeo's mind. He came to me when the doctor left to ask if he had understood rightly that the great hour of hope or dread drew nigh. I told him

we should know by dawn, and that till then all must be quiet as the grave. His face startled me by its intensity, as standing at the foot of the bed he fixed his eyes on the unconscious face of his master and *salaamed* to it with all the reverence he would have given to a god. But he spoke calmly to me, saying that as I would doubtless be loth to leave the room he would order the servants to bring me something to eat there. He presently appeared, bearing the tray himself, giving as a reason for this unusual service his desire to avoid any disturbance. It was just upon twelve o'clock when, with Shivdeo's help, I gave Terence, who was quite unconscious, a few drops of stimulant before sitting down with a sinking heart to my anxious watch. It was early April, and the doors, set wide open to let in the cool air, showed a stretch of moonlit grass where shadows from the unseen trees above quivered and shifted as the night-wind stirred the leaves. In the breathless silence I could hear even the faint respiration of the sick man, and found myself counting its rise and fall, until the last thing I remembered was Shivdeo's immovable figure with the moonlight streaming full in his face.

When I awoke the rapid eastern dawn had come. The sparrows were twittering in the verandah and Shivdeo stood by his master's bed holding his finger to his lips. " Hush ! " he whispered, as my eyes met his ; " the light has brought life to the Giver of Light."

It must have been the sound of wheels which woke me, for ere I had time to reply the doctor entered the room, and after a glance at his patient shook me silently by the hand. " I believe he's through," he said, when he had cautiously examined the sleeping man ; " fever gone, pulse stronger. I scarcely dared to hope for it even with his splendid constitution. Hullo ! what's that ? " It was only a tiny spot of blood on the forehead just where the trident of Shiva is painted

by his worshippers, but it showed vividly against the pallor of the skin.

"There is a little spot by the Light-Giver's feet also," remarked Shivdeo quietly. "I noticed it yesterday just after the Presence cut his hand with the soda-water bottle." And sure enough there was one.

"I can't think how I came to fall asleep," I said to him after the doctor had gone; "just at the critical time, too, when I was most wanted."

The man smiled. "We do not always guess aright when we are wanted, *Huzoor*. You slept and the Light-Giver got better. It is God's way; He has refreshed you both."

"Refreshed!" I retorted crossly. "I feel as if I had been pounded in a mortar. I had the most frightful dreams, but I can't recall what they were."

"It is not well to try," replied Shivdeo, with rather an odd look. "If I were the Presence I would forget them. There is enough evil to come without recalling what is past and over for ever."

Perhaps involuntarily I followed his suggestion, for, though I chased the fleeting memory more than once through my brain, I never overtook it.

Terence O'Reilly made a quick recovery; but in view of the fast approaching hot weather, the doctors put him on board ship as soon as it could be done with safety. Hurry was the order of the day, so it was not until my return from seeing him to Bombay that I found time for outside affairs. Then it was that Shivdeo informed me of poor little Boots' death in the interval. As the Presence was aware, he said, it had been thought advisable when perfect quiet was necessary to the Light-Bringer to send the child away from the compound, because of the difficulty experienced in keeping it out of the house. So it had gone with its nurse to the cantonment-sweeper's hut, where it had caught fresh cold and died. By the advice of the native doctor who had seen it, he had kept

the death secret at first, from fear of the news delaying his master's recovery. I made every inquiry, but found nothing of any kind to give rise to suspicion of foul play. The native doctor had sent medicine three days running as for bronchitis, and on the fourth he had seen the child's dead body. It had died, he thought, of croup.

"You will write and tell the Light-Bringer?" asked Shivdeo when the inquiry was over. "And you will say that I did my best, my very best, for my lord's interest?"

"Certainly," I replied; "but he will be sorry, the child was so fond of him."

"When people are beautiful as Krishna like the Lord of Light it is easy to be fond of them."

I did not see Shivdeo again for over three months, and the bungalow in the Civil Lines, which he kept swept and garnished against his master's return, gradually assumed the soulless, empty appearance peculiar to the dwelling-places of those who make holiday at the other side of the world. Then a message came to say that he was ill, and wished to see me on business. I found him, a mere wreck and shadow of his former self, propped up against his old pillar in the verandah. He shook his head over my suggestions of remedies. "I have taken many," he replied quietly, "for the native doctor is my caste-brother. The hand of Shiva is not to be turned aside, and am I not his sworn servant? What ails me? Nay, who can say what ails the heart when it ceases to beat? Men cannot live without the light, and it is night for me now. Perhaps that is it, who knows? Yonder old man is my father come to see me die; yet ere the last 'Ram-Ram' sounds in mine ears I want the Presence to understand something; else would I not have vexed his quiet. It will be hard for the *Huzoor* to understand, because he is not of our race."

He paused so long that I asked what he wished me to understand,

thinking that in his weakness he had drifted away from his desire. "Something new and strange," he answered, "yet old and true. See! I sit here in the old place, and the Presence shall sit there as he used to do, because old memories return in the old places, making us see and remember things that are past or forgotten. Is it not so?"

Truly enough, as I humoured him by occupying the familiar chair, ready placed half-way between the bed and the window, it seemed to me as if I were once more watching Terence pass through the valley of the shadow.

"The Presence once slept in that chair," continued the weak voice, "and he dreamed a dream. Let him recall it now, if he can."

How or wherefore I know not, but as he spoke a sudden certainty as to what he wished me to know rushed in on me. "Great God," I cried, starting up and seizing him roughly by the shoulder, "you killed poor little Boots! You brought the child here! You killed it before his very eyes and mine! I know it! I think,—I think I saw it done!"

He set my hand aside with unexpected force and a strange dignity. "I am the prisoner of Death, *Huzoor!* There is no need to hold me; I cannot escape him. For the rest, if I killed the child, what then? The Lord of Light lives and that is enough for me. What is a Sudra or two more or less to the Brahman? But what if it was a devil sucking his heart's blood because of his beauty? Shall I not have honour for saving him? Thus both ways I am absolved; but not from my oath, the false oath which I swore to my lord for my own sake. When I wander through the shades waiting for Vishnu's decree, it will lead my blind steps to the body of a foul thing. So I speak that the Presence may judge and say if I were not justified, and confess that we people of the old knowledge are not always wrong. *Huzoor!* you have seen its eyes glisten, as its body clung to his beauty; you

know he sickened after it had lain night and day in his arms; you know how it crept and crawled to get at him while he lay helpless. Now listen! One day he was better, brighter in all things, and bid you refresh yourself in the air. I sat here, and like you I fell asleep; and when I woke the thing was at him, close to his heart, its arms round his neck, its devilish lips at his throat, crooning away like an accursed cat! And he was in the death sleep that lasted till the dawn came that you and I remember so well. Then I knew it must be, and that my oath was as a reed in the flood. Yet would I not be hasty. I took counsel with holy men, men of mighty wisdom, men with such tenderness for life that they bid God speed to the flea which keeps them wakeful; but they all said, 'Yea! one of the two must die.' Did I stop to ask which? Not I. So I fasted, and prayed, and made clean my heart, and waited patiently for the moment of fate; for so they bid me. Even then, *Huzoor*, the holy men would do naught by chance or without proof. It was a bright moonlight night and the Presence slept by reason of our arts and drugs; and so we put the cursed creature we had brought from the sweeper's hut down at the gate, yonder by the flowering oleanders, and hiding ourselves among them, watched it. Straight, straight as a hawk or a bustard, until we found it there in the old place! Devil of Hell! we made it vomit back the blood, we——"

My hand was on his mouth, my one thought to stop the horrible words that somehow conjured up the still more horrible sight before my eyes. "I know,—there is no need for more, —I cannot bear it."

And indeed, the vision of poor dumb little Boots in their relentless hold froze my blood. As my hands fell away from him in sudden, shrinking horror, he looked at me compassionately. "The Presence does not understand aright. Let him remember the strange doctor's face when he

came in the dawn, thinking to find hope had fled. One of the two had to die. If the Presence had thought as I did, as I *knew*, what would he have done?"

I was silent.

His face, which had remained calm enough so far, assumed a look of agonised entreaty as with an effort painful to see he dragged himself to my feet and clung to them. "What would you have done, *Huzoor*, in my place? What would you have done?"

Then a fearful fit of coughing seized him and his lips were tinged with blood. Water lay close at hand, yet I knew that this murderer would sooner have died than accept it from my defiling hand; so I called the old man who all this time had sat like a carved image in the next archway. He came, and wiped the dews of death from his son's face without a word; and as he did so Shivdeo, looking at the faint stains on the cloth, smiled an unearthly smile and whispered, "I did not suck my lord's blood, for all that. It comes from my own heart."

I am not ashamed to say that my brain was in such a whirl that I turned to escape from a situation where I felt utterly lost. As I did so, I heard Shivdeo's voice for the last time. The old man was holding a little brass cup of water to the parched

lips; but it was arrested by the dying hand, and the dying eyes looked wistfully up into his father's.

"Did I do well, O my father?" he asked.

"You did well, my son; drink in peace."

When I reached home, the English mail was in. It brought a letter from Terence. He was in Dublin and engaged to be married; considering that he was an Irishman, no more need be said. He wrote the kindest letter, saying that the great happiness which had come into his life made him all the more grateful to me, seeing that but for my care he would have gone down to the grave without knowing how the love of a good woman can make existence seem a sacred trust. He ended by these words, "And sure, old man, if it be true that all happiness is bought, some one must have paid dear for mine!"

I could not sleep that night; the war of conflicting thoughts waged too fiercely; but it was nearly dawn before I found it impossible to withstand the memory of Shivdeo's cry: "If the Presence had thought as I did, what would he have done?"

He was dead before I reached the house, but surely if he knows anything, he must know that I, for one, cast no stone.

MIDSUMMER MAGIC.

"THEN," I said, "you decline telling me about the three Kings, when their procession wound round and round these hillocks; all the little wooden horses with golden bridles and velvet holsters out of the toy-boxes, and the camelopard, and the monkeys and the lynx, and the little doll-pages blowing toy trumpets. And still, I know it happened here, because I recognise the place from the pictures: the hillocks all washed away into breasts like those of Diana of the Ephesians, and the rows of cypresses and spruce pines, also out of the toy-box. I know it happened in this very place, because Benozzo Gozzoli painted it all at the time; and you were already about the place, I presume?"

I knew that by her dress, but I did not like to allude to its being old-fashioned. It was the sort of thing, muslin all embroidered with little nosegays of myrtle and yellow broom, and tied into odd bunches at the elbows and waist, which they wore in the days of Botticelli's *Spring*; and on her head she had a garland of eglantine and palm-shaped hellebore leaves which was quite unmistakable.

The nymph Terzollina (for of course she was the tutelary divinity of the narrow valley behind the great Medicean Villa) merely shook her head and shifted one of her bare feet, on which she was seated under a cypress tree, and went on threading the yellow broom-flowers.

"At all events, you might tell me something about the Magnificent Lorenzo," I went on, impatient at her obstinacy. "You know quite well that he used to come and court you here, and make verses most likely."

The exasperating goddess raised her thin brown face, with the sharp squirrel's teeth and the glittering

goat's eyes. Very pretty I thought her, though undoubtedly a little *passée*, like all the symbolical ladies of her set. She plucked at a clump of dry peppermint, perfuming the hot air as she crushed it, and then looked up, with a sly, shy little peasant-girl's look, which was absurd in a lady so mature and so elaborately adorned. Then, in a crooning voice, she began to recite some stanzas in *ottava rima*, as follows.

"The house where the good old Knight Gualando hid away the little Princess, was itself hidden in this hidden valley. It was small and quite white, with great iron bars to the windows. In front was a long piece of greensward, starred with white clover, and behind and in front, to where the pines and cypresses began, ran strips of corn-field. It was remote from all the pomps of life; and when the cuckoo had become silent and the nightingales had cracked their voices, the only sound was the coo of the wood-pigeons, the babble of the stream, and the twitter of the young larks.

"The old Knight Gualando had hidden his bright armour in an oaken chest; and went to the distant town every day dressed in the blue smock of a peasant, and driving a donkey before him. Thence he returned with delicacies for the little Princess and with news of the wicked usurper; nor did any one suspect who he was, or dream of his hiding-place.

"During his absence the little Princess, whose name was Fiordispina, used to string buds through the hot hours when the sun smote through the trees, and the green corn ridges began to take a faint gilding in their silveriness, as the Princess remembered it in a picture in the Castle chapel, where the sun was represented by a big

embossed ball of gold, projecting from the picture, which she was allowed to stroke on holidays.

"In the evening, when the sky turned pearl white, and a breeze rustled through the pines and cypresses which made a little black fringe on the hill top and a little patch of velvet pile on the slopes, the little Princess would come forth, and ramble about in her peasant's frock, her fair face stained browner by the sun than by any walnut juice. She would climb the hill, and sniff the scent of the sun-warmed resin, and the sweetness of the yellow broom. It spread all over the hills, and the King, her father, had not possessed so many ells of cloth of gold.

"But one evening she wandered further than usual, and saw on a bank, at the edge of a cornfield, five big white lilies blowing. She went back home and fetched the golden scissors from her work-bag, and cut off one of the lilies. On the next day she came again and cut another until she had cut them all.

"But it happened that an old witch was staying in that neighbourhood, gathering herbs among the hills. She had taken note of the five lilies, because she disliked them on account of their being white; and she remarked that one of them had been cut off; then another, then another. She hated people who like lilies. When she found the fifth lily gone, she wondered greatly, and climbed on the ridge, and looked at their stalks where they were cut. She was a wise woman, who knew many things. So she laid her finger upon the cut stalk, and said, 'This has not been cut with iron shears'; and she laid her lip against the cut stalk, and felt that it had been cut with golden shears, for gold cuts like nothing else.

"Oho!", said the old witch—"where there are golden scissors, there must be golden work-bags; and where there are golden work-bags, there must be little Princesses."

"Well, and then?" I asked.

"Oh then, nothing at all," answered the Nymph Terzollina beloved by the Magnificent Lorenzo, who had seen the procession of the Three Kings. "Good evening to you."

And where her white muslin dress, embroidered with nosegays of broom and myrtle, had been spread on the dry grass and crushed mint, there was only, beneath the toy cypresses, a bush of white-starred myrtle and a tuft of belated yellow broom.

One must have leisure to converse with goddesses; and certainly, during a summer in Tuscany, when folk are scattered in their country houses, and are disinclined to move out of hammock or off shaded bench, there are not many other persons to talk with.

On the other hand, during those weeks of cloudless summer, natural objects vie with each other in giving one amateur representations. Things look their most unexpected, masquerade as other things, get queer unintelligible allegoric meanings, leaving you to guess what it all means, a constant dumb crambo of trees, flowers, animals, houses, and moonlight. The moon, particularly, is continually *en scène*, as if to take the place of the fireflies, who perform their complicated quadrilles only so long as the corn is in the ear; gradually getting extinguished and trailing about, humble helpless moths with a pale phosphorescence of tail in the grass and in the curtains. The moon takes their place; the moon which, in an Italian summer, seems to be full for three weeks out of the four.

One evening the performance was given by the moon and the corn-sheaves, assisted by minor actors such as crickets, downy owls, and vine-garlands. The oats, which had been of such exquisite delicacy of green, had just been reaped in the field beyond our garden and were now stacked up. Suspecting one of the usual performances, I went after dinner to the upper garden-gate, and looked through the bars. There it was, the familiar, elemental witchery. The

moon was nearly full, blurring the stars, steeping the sky and earth in pale blue mist, which seemed somehow to be the visible falling dew. It left a certain greenness to the broad grass path, a vague yellow to the unsickled wheat; and threw upon the sheaves of oats the shadows of trees and vine-garlands. Those sheaves, or stooks,—who can describe their metamorphose? Palest yellow on the pale stubbly ground, they were frosted by the moonbeams in their crisp fringe of ears, and in the shining straws projecting here and there. Straws, ears,—you would never have guessed that they were made of anything so mundane. They sat there, propped against the trees, between the pools of light and the shadows, while the crickets trilled their cool, shrill song, sitting solemnly with an air of expectation, calling to me, frightening me. And one in particular, with a great additional bunch on his head cut by a shadow, was oddly unaccountable and terrible. After a minute I had to slink away back into the garden, like an intruder.

There are performances also in broad daylight, and here human beings are admitted as supernumeraries. Such was a certain cattle-fair, up the valley of the Mugnone.

The beasts were being sold on a piece of rough, freshly reaped ground, lying between the high road and the river bed, empty of waters, but full among its shingle of myrrh-scented yellow herbage. The oxen were mostly of the white Tuscan breeds (those of Romagna, smaller but more spirited, are of a delicate grey) only their thighs slightly browned; the scarlet cloth neck-fringes set off, like a garland of geranium, against the perfect milkiness of backs and necks. They looked indeed, these gigantic creatures, as if moulded out of whipped cream or cream cheese; suggesting no strength, and even no resistance to the touch, with their smooth surface here and there puckered into minute wrinkles, exactly like the

little *stracchini* cheeses. This impalpable whiteness of the beasts suited their perfect tameness, passiveness, letting themselves be led about with great noiseless strides over the stubbly ridges and up the steep banks; and hustled together, flank against flank, horns interlaced with horns, without even a sound or movement of astonishment or disobedience. Never a low or a moo; never a glance round of their big, long-lashed, blue-brown eyes. Their big jaws move like millstones, their long tufted tails switch monotonously like pendulums.

Around them circle peasants, measuring them with the eye, prodding them with the finger, pulling them by the horns. And every now and then one of the red-faced men, butchers mainly, who act as go-betweens, dramatically throws his arms round the neck of some recalcitrant dealer or buyer, leads him aside, whispering with a gesture like Judas's kiss; or he claps together the red hands and arms of contracting parties, silencing their objections, forcing them to do business. The contrast is curious between these hot, excited, yelling, jostling human beings, above whose screaming *Dio Canes!* and *Dio Ladros!* the cry of the iced-water seller recurs monotonously, and the silent, impassive bullocks, white, unreal, inaudible; so still and huge, indeed, that, seen from above, they look like an encampment, their white flanks like so much spread canvas in the sunshine. And from a little distance, against the hillside beyond the river, the already bought yokes of bullocks look, tethered in a grove of cypresses, like some odd medieval allegory,—an allegory, as usual, nobody knows of what.

Another performance was that of the woods of Lecceto, and the hermitage of the same name. You will find them on the map of the district of Siena; but I doubt very much whether you will find them on the surface of the real globe, for I suspect them to be a piece of Mid-

summer Magic and nothing more. They had been for years to me among the number (we all have such) of things familiar but inaccessible; or rather things whose inaccessibility, due to no conceivable cause, is an essential quality of their existence. Every now and then from one of the hills you would get a glimpse of the square red tower, massive and battlemented, rising among the grey of its ilxes, beckoning one across a ridge or two and a valley; then disappearing again, engulfed in the oak woods, green in summer, copper-coloured in winter; to reappear, but on the side you least expected it, plumes of ilxes, battlements of tower, as you twisted along the high-lying vineyards and the clusters of umbrella pines fringing the hill tops; and then, another minute, and they were gone.

We determined to attain to them, to be mocked no longer by Lecceto; and went forth on one endless July afternoon. After much twisting from hillside to hillside and valley to valley, we at last got into a country which was strange enough to secrete even Lecceto. In a narrow valley we were met by a scent, warm, delicious, familiar, but which seemed to lead us (as perfumes we cannot identify will usually do) to ideas very hazy, but clear enough to be utterly inappropriate; English cottage-gardens, linen-presses of old houses, old-fashioned sitting-rooms full of jars of *potpourri*. And then, behold, in front of us a hill covered every inch of it with flowering lavender, growing as heather does on the hills outside fairyland. And behind this lilac, sun-baked, scented hill, opened the woods of ilxes. The trees were mostly young and with their summer upper-garment of green, fresh leaves over the crackling old ones; trees packed close like a hedge, their every gap filled with other verdure, arbutus and hornbeam, fern and heather; the close-set greenery crammed, as it were, with freshness and solitude. These must be the woods of Lecceto, and in their depths the red battlemented

tower of the Hermitage. For I had forgotten to say that for a thousand years that tower had been the abode of a succession of holy personages, so holy and so like each other as to have almost grown into one, an immortal Hermit whom Popes and Emperors would come to consult and be blessed by. Deeper and deeper therefore we made our way into the green coolness and dampness, the ineffable deliciousness of young leaf and uncurling fern; till it seemed as if the plantation were getting impenetrable, and we began to think that, as usual, Lecceto had mocked us, and would probably appear, if we retraced our steps, in the diametrically opposite direction. When suddenly, over the tree-tops, rose the square battlemented tower of red brick. Then, at a turn of the rough narrow lane there was the whole place, the tower, a church and steeple, and some half-fortified buildings, in a wide clearing planted with olive trees. We tied our pony to an ilx and went to explore the Hermitage. But the building was enclosed round by water and hedges, and the only entrance was by a stout gate armed with a knocker, behind which was apparently an outer yard and a high wall pierced only by a twisted iron balcony. So we knocked.

But that knocker was made only for Popes and Emperors walking about with their tiaras and crowns and sceptres, like the genuine Popes and Emperors of Italian folk-tales and of Pinturicchio's frescoes, for no knocking of ours, accompanied by loud yells, could elicit an answer. It seemed simple enough to get in some other way; there must be peasants about at work, even supposing the holy hermit to have ceased to exist. But climbing wall and hurdles and squeezing between the close tight ilxes, brought us only to more walls, above which, as above the oak woods from a distance, rose the inaccessible battlemented tower. And a small shepherdess, in a flapping Leghorn hat, herding black and white baby pigs in a neighbouring stubble-field under the olives, was no

more able than we to break the spell of the Hermitage. And all round, for miles apparently, undulated the dense grey plumage of the ilex woods. The low sun was turning the stubble orange, where the pigs were feeding ; and the distant hills of the Maremma were growing very blue behind the olive trees. So, lest night should overtake us, we turned our pony's head towards the city, and traversed the oak woods and skirted the lavender hill, rather disbelieving in the reality of the place we had just been at, save when we saw its tower mock us, emerging again ; an inaccessible, improbable place. The air was scented by the warm lavender of the hillsides, and by the pines forming a Japanese pattern, black upon the golden lacquer of the sky. Soon the moon rose, big and yellow, lighting very gradually the road in whose gloom you could scarcely see the yokes of white cattle returning from work. By the time we reached the city hill everything was steeped in a pale yellowish light, with queer yellowish shadows : and the tall tanneries glared out with their buttressed balconied top, exaggerated and alarming. Scrambling up the moonlit steep of Frath Branda, and passing under a black arch, we found ourselves in the heart of the gaslit and crowded city, much as if we had been shot out of a cannon into another planet, and feeling that the Hermitage of Lecceto was absolutely apocryphal.

The reason of this midsummer magic, —whose existence no legitimate descendant of Goths and Vandals and other early lovers of Italy can possibly deny,—the reason is altogether beyond my philosophy. The only word which expresses the phenomenon, is the German word, untranslatable, *Bescheerung*, an universal giving of gifts, lighting of candles, gilding of apples, manifestation of marvels, realisation of the desirable and improbable,—to wit, a Christmas Tree. And Italy, which knows no Christmas Trees, makes its *Bescheerung* in midsummer, gets rid of

its tourist vulgarities, hides away the characteristics of its trivial nineteenth century, decks itself with magnolia blossoms and water-melons, with awnings and street booths, with mandolins and guitars ; spangles itself with church festivals and local pageants ; and instead of wax tapers and Chinese lanterns, lights up the biggest golden sun by day, the biggest silver moon by night, all for the benefit of a few childish descendants of Goths and Vandals.

Nonsense apart, I am inclined to think that the specific charm of Italy exists only during the hot months ; the charm which gives one a little stab now and then and makes one say,—“This is Italy.”

I felt that little stab, to which my heart had long become unused, at the beginning of this very summer in Tuscany, to which belong the above instances of Italian Midsummer Magic. I was spending the day at a small but very ancient Benedictine Monastery (it was a century old when St. Peter Ignæus, according to the chronicle, went through his “celebrated Ordeal by Fire”), now turned into a farm, and hidden, battlemented walls and great gate-towers, among the cornfields near the Arno. It came to me as the revival of an impression long forgotten, that overpowering sense that “This was Italy,” recurred and recurred in those same three words, as I sat under the rose-hedge opposite the water-wheel shed garlanded with drying pea-straw ; and as I rambled through the chill vaults, redolent of old wine-vats, into the sudden sunshine and broad shadows of the cloistered yards. That smell was mysteriously connected with it ; the smell of wine-vats mingled, I fancy (though I could not say why), with the sweet faint smell of decaying plaster and wood-work. One night, as we were driving through Bologna to while away the hours between two trains, in the blue moon-mist and deep shadows of the black porticoed city, that same smell came to my nostrils as in a dream, and with it a whiff of by-gone years, the years when first I had had

this impression of Italian Magic. Oddly enough, Rome, where I spent much of my childhood and which was the object of my childish and tragic adoration, was always something apart, never Italy for my feelings. The Apennines of Lucca and Pistoia, with their sudden revelation of Italian fields and lanes, of flowers on wall and along roadside, of bells ringing in the summer sky, of peasants working in the fields and with the loom and distaff, meant Italy. But how much more Italy,—and hence longed for how much!—was Lucca, the town in the plain, with cathedral and palaces. Nay, any of the mountain hamlets where there was nothing modern, and where against the scarred brick masonry and blackened stonework the cypresses rose black and tapering, the trellisses crawled bright green up the hill! One never feels, once out of childhood, such joy as on the rare occasions when I was taken to such places. A certain farmhouse, with cypresses at the terrace corner and a great oleander over the wall, was also Italy before it became my home for some years. Most

of all, however, Italy was represented by certain towns; Bologna, Padua, and Vicenza, and Siena, which I saw mainly in the summer.

It is curious how one's associations change. Nowadays Italy means mainly certain familiar effects of light and cloud, certain exquisitenesses of sunset amber against ultramarine hills, of winter mists among misty olives, of folds and folds of pale blue mountains; it is a country which belongs to no time, which will always exist, superior to picturesqueness and romance. But that is but a vague, half-indifferent habit of enjoyment. And every now and then, when the Midsummer Magic is rife, there comes to me that very different, old, childish meaning of the word; as on that day among the roses of those Benedictine cloisters, the cool shadow of the fig-trees in the yards, with the whiff of that queer smell, heavy with romance, of wine-saturated oak and crumbling plaster; and then I know with a little stab of joy, that "This is Italy."

VERNON LEE.

EDUCATION FOR THE COLONIES.

IN spite of all that the educationists have to say against early specialisation, this is the day of specialised education. The bifurcation of the school curriculum applies to nearly every boy by the time he is fifteen or sixteen; his education henceforward is either classical or scientific, "modern" or commercial. If he be contemplating Woolwich he has no time to lose; with the syllabus of the examination kept constantly before him, he attacks the most "paying" of the obligatory subjects, and skirmishes with those that are optional. If Sandhurst be his aim, there is certainly more time to spare; but nevertheless he joins the military class, and the percentage of its failures will prove to him he can hardly join too soon. Thus, by the time most young fellows are sixteen years of age they have chosen, or had chosen for them, their ideal career in life, and are preparing themselves for passing through that strait gate to all professions,—the examination.

But the ideal is not the actual. The examiner is captious, and his discomfiture is difficult. What of those who fail to satisfy his requirements? Whither go the great army of failures, the ever increasing number of the discomfited? "Some to business, some to pleasure, take;" the counting-houses of the City are full of them, well-groomed, athletic, uncommercial clerks; in the smoking-rooms of the junior clubs you find them, conspicuously arrayed, but conscious that they are (saving the indulgence of their mothers) penniless. These stages, however, are transient; and before long the wide borders of Greater Britain allure them from the old country. There is the brief excitement of the outfitting, the interlude of the voyage, and then the taking up

of their citizenship in a far country and a new. They have been partially educated for the army, or the civil service, or the law, or what not; but for this new life in the Colonies they have had no preparation.

What follows? I will recall from my actual experience three typical cases. A., representing the "first-class average," was at Eton, and thence proceeded to Oxford. To please his father he read for a degree and took it, after many days. Becoming a student of an Inn of Court, he learnt the laws affecting dog-licenses, the rule of the road, and the regulations imposed by the Thames Conservancy. He also acquired a fund of really excellent legal anecdote. But all this was mere temporising; the day which saw him an emigrant, in one sense a first-class emigrant, could not long be deferred. The scene is changed. He became a Manitoba farmer, knowing nothing of agriculture. In the novelty of the life lay its attraction; he had forgotten that when the novelty wore off it would become monotonous. This soon happened, and then he took to sport. The farm, in time, was sold, and his debts were paid by a cheque from home. Again is the scene changed. When I met him he was keeping a whisky-store in a mushroom city. It paid him in a sense, but in another sense he was ruined. There is nothing so insidious nor so invincible as drink. I last saw him besotted, almost unrecognisable, a confirmed tramp, keeping himself from starvation by an occasional job at splitting rails or the like. And this, I repeat, is a sketch from life.

I met B. driving a waggon across a gulch. Brawny he was of muscle, long of limb, evidently a hard worker. He quoted a line from the Georgics,

and explained, by way of apology, that he had been "in the Sixth." He had spent his small patrimony in a heroic attempt to farm six hundred and forty acres, on the strength, presumably, of his acquaintance with the Georgics. But though adversity had soured him, it had not beaten him; he had become a first-rate "hand," and his work was well paid. Nevertheless he had no future. He was a farm-labourer.

I take C. from Florida, the possessor of a small orange grove and some thirty acres of uncleared land. He was in all respects typical of several hundred young Englishmen in exactly the same circumstances. This is his history: superannuated at sixteen, he was articled, after an interval, to a solicitor. The work became so distasteful that in three years' time he exchanged it for the duties and attenuated income of an usher; two terms sufficed to bring him to the office of the White Star Line, where he bought a through ticket for Florida. In Florida, when I met him, he was more or less patiently awaiting the maturing of his orange grove, and meanwhile seeing, and yet not seeing, his property going to pieces. For lack of the skill to wield hammer and chisel, saw and plane, the fences round his place were tumbling down, and through the roof of his house the rain found its way; the waggon stood useless in its shed for the want of an hour's work on spoke and tire. On every hand were signs of like decay. The trees were pruned too late and the seedlings set out too early; when they were budded a sharp young Yankee was called in at three dollars a day, for C., like the majority of his fellows, knew nothing of the life or the needs of a plant. Of Nature he was supremely ignorant; he was blind and deaf and a cripple amid her luxuriance. Finally the "hard pan" he had cursed for sterility was recognised by a neighbour, with some slight knowledge of geology, as phosphate rock, and the place changed hands at a low figure. When I last saw C. he was picking at this

"hard pan" for a dollar and a half a day, all for the abundant profit of the unneighbourly neighbour.

Common to these three cases is the characteristic feature that not one of the three men had had any previous training for the life they were living; not one had been educated for a colonial career. A., trained in agriculture, would have found interest and profit in farming: B., likewise trained, would not have attempted the impossible and lost his capital at the outset; and C., not having mastered even the elements of fruit-culture, lacking even "the handy man's" acquaintance with tools, and having no knowledge of Nature, no suspicion, apparently, that the earth is anything but dirt, saw another reap a harvest where he had only found a blight. Such is the history of three men whose intelligence had been cultivated, and whose literary education had been far from neglected. These lives are true and typical of a large class, and show how many failures, perfectly avoidable, are to be met with in the Colonies. Of those who have failed and come home I have said nothing; the "returned empties" are legion.

As I have described these failures as avoidable, I will show not only why but how they are avoidable. I hope to show that these men should and could have succeeded; that every young fellow who goes out to the Colonies with a fair amount of character and capital, can do so with a certainty of success if,—and herein lies the kernel—if he will only be *educated for the Colonies*.

Few people know what this means; few can realise the utter change from England to, say, the Queensland Bush. There are no servants, no water-pipes, no carpenters, butchers, or bakers; no neighbouring towns; no shops in which to buy what you may have forgotten; no one to do the work for you, except at exorbitant prices, and often not then, which in the old country half a hundred trades combine in doing. Is the leg of your

only armchair broken? You must mend it, or sit on a box. Is the door off its hinges? It must be re-hung, or propped up with a log. Do you wish for bread? Then bake it. For meat? You can have it if you will kill the beast, cut out your joint and cook it. Are your trousers wearing at the knees, your sleeves at the elbows? Patch them. Is the blanket that keeps off chills and fever in the early morning wearing thin or rent? Darn it. Is the harness broken? Repair it. Is the back-board of the cart gone? Take your saw and plane and make a new one. Is the horse ill? Make him up a bolus. And so the list might run on interminably. If you want a thing done you must do it yourself; that is the golden rule of colonial life.

Here and there in a colonial experience one meets with a man who can make or mend his furniture, his clothes, or his harness; who can bake bread which is not lead, and can cook a bird or a beast to a turn; who knows when a horse is sick or sorry, and can treat it in accordance; who understands the principles of farming, finds interest in its practice, and has sympathy with Nature; who is aware that as soon as the sun arises he must rise too, for each day, according as he uses it, is his friend or his enemy. And when you meet this man, you will not want me to tell you he is successful; but I can tell you that it will be a long day's march before you find him in a young Englishman.

The great necessity for the lad who is contemplating emigration, and emigration ought to be contemplated quite as seriously as the professions, is that he should anticipate in some measure the life he will lead in the colony. That is to say, it is of all things the most important that he should have lived on a farm, working day after day at some one or other of the many occupations of farm-life. It is not sufficient that he should work and live merely as the farmer does;

he has other work before him in the future, and wider interests. The farmer sends his horses to the village smithy; the colonist in embryo must learn to shoe the horses himself. The farmer gets his cart repaired at the wheelwright's; the colonial cadet must himself be something of a wheelwright. But still it is the daily life on the farm which will stand him most in stead. He will acquire the habits of the agriculturist; to rise early, to apportion the work not only to the seasons but to the days; to watch Nature with observant eyes and to reflect; to realise by experience that cultivation is as important as sowing, that he will certainly never reap a harvest, sow as he will, unless he tend the growing plant from its earliest stages with assiduous care and intelligence. Day after day to go forth, knowing that there is work to be done, that must be done, and that to-morrow may be too late,—this is an invaluable school. This open-air, healthy life, while it invigorates the physical being, tends to impress on the character a distinctive mould. It makes the young man regular in habit, simple in life, methodical in manner; it teaches him in the school of experience the meaning of that ancient saw, *Festina lente*. It inures him to a daily labour with faith in the future; he learns that the processes are many, and the progress slow, by which Nature goes forward to her perfect work.

This, then, is the influence on his character, a most important factor. More men have failed and perished through the exposure of their unformed, unannealed characters to the peculiar stress of colonial life than through any amount of technical ignorance. It is too well known that your "young gentleman" is often the foulest-mouthed and wildest drinker of all the loafers in the saloons; the restraints of convention once removed, the pendulum swings back with dislocating force. And it is no easy thing to toil regularly without an apprenticeship to it; the necessity of rising early comes hard to him who

has never got up early save by accident or compulsion. "Dogged does it"; persistence and perseverance stand justified in any colonial experience. When Sir Arthur Hodgson, one of the most eminent of colonists, migrated in his early days to Australia, he went with small means and poor prospects; but he went with the determination of making a fortune. When he built his first hut he put over the mantelpiece this legend, *A rolling stone gathers no moss*; and over his mantelpiece it remained till fortune, and more than fortune, had been won.

There is a reed on which too many young men lean when they set their faces east or west, the reed known as the "letter of introduction." Good chances have been lost and evil habits contracted while these young Englishmen have been kicking their heels about the capital, waiting to see what would come from the letter of introduction. The great experience of Sir Napier Broome, who was a squatter before he became an official, must command attention; and what does he say concerning letters of introduction? This:—"In my colonial career I have had hundreds of young fellows coming out to me with letters of introduction. What could many of them do? Nothing at all, except to simply present their letter and to ask for some small place under the Government." Of course he was unable to grant the request in the great majority of cases.

To return to the technical knowledge gained on a farm. It is invaluable. True, the practice of American and Australian farming is not as ours; but then the principles are the same. The growth of vegetation is ordered by well-known and universally applicable laws, and he who is cognisant of these in the one hemisphere can apply them unerringly in the other. The treatment of soils, the preservation of pastures, the rotation of crops, the processes of cultivation, the art of breeding and feeding stock, veterinary science, insect pests, times and sea-

sons,—all these are matters which, with slight adjustment, may be appreciated equally well everywhere. There are various modes of ploughing and many kinds of ploughs; but the man who can and does plough in England can and will plough in any other part of the world. So with the care of stock. Much the same physiological laws bear on breeding and feeding, wherever stock may be found. They are not easy to master and it needs experience to diagnose disease. Yet it is a matter of daily occurrence that a man starts a ranch and becomes the owner of thousands of head of stock without having the most elementary knowledge of animal hygiene, the preservation of health and the prevention of disease.

Some parents, however, actually question whether any course of preparation in England will be of practical value in the Colonies, and there are those who declare that such arts as milking, carpentry, and shoeing are comparatively unimportant and will not pay for the learning. To such objections I will not reply by argument, nor even by an appeal to common-sense; it will suffice if I quote from letters which have been sent home by young colonists, which testify to the lessons of actual experience and amply prove my point. And, by way of preface, I may again cite Sir Napier Broome:—"A young man arriving in any colony, having received an agricultural and industrial education framed for the needs of colonial life, has at once a marketable value the moment he lands, and will find no difficulty whatever. It is the first period, the first six months in a colony, which is the critical time, and any young man after such an education as I have suggested will be able to take ordinary daily occupation. He can thus shift for himself, and all the while he is gaining practical colonial experience, which is as good as a ready-made income to him."

With regard to the value of some general skill, I clip the following ex-

tract from a letter sent home by a young colonist in the North-West Territory:—"To get on well here a fellow wants to be able to turn his hand to anything that turns up: all skilled, in fact, *all* labour is scarce and very costly. To be able to mend harness, a knowledge of carpentry, smiths' work and dairy-work are especially useful. The dairying I learnt has been most useful to me. . . . If a fellow makes up his mind to rough it a bit and work hard, he can't help doing well; but *one can't know too much* out here."

As to milking, this is what a lad writes home from Queensland:—"The milking I learnt is very useful. I have the name of being a good milker. It is reckoned that only about one per cent. of 'New Chums' who come out here are able to milk." Another, who had learnt to plough in England, says: "I am the boss ploughman of my neighbourhood."

In support of carpentry and its value, I could give many extracts, but the two which follow may suffice: "The first thing I had to do when I got out here was to build a house. The plans and notes which I made at home I found very useful. They were in constant request." The second is from a letter in which the writer describes the demolition by a flood of the bridge which linked him to his market. Loss stared him in the face, but he had learnt carpentry, and he made up his mind to build a new bridge. "It took the three of us about a week to put it up, sticking to it all the time. We had to cut five stringers fifteen feet long and one foot square, then nail the boards on, and fill up with earth. It looks grand now and has to carry a good deal of traffic."

As to the importance of an ability to shoe, I will quote Sir Edward Braddon, the Agent-General for Tasmania:—"Those who have been in the Colonies," he says, "will understand the value of such work as this. Speaking from my own experience, whenever a horse of mine cast a shoe,

it meant that the man would lose a whole day in getting it put on, though I was only two and a half miles away from the nearest forge. There are some who are ten or fifteen miles away, [and some fifty] and to these people the loss of a shoe means the loss of a good deal of time, which will never occur to any one who has learnt something of farriery, and who, whenever the occasion requires, can put a shoe on."

And here is testimony of a more general character:—"Any one coming out would do well to know something of veterinary work and dairying; also the blacksmiths' and carpenters' shops will be of great use to him." That is from a young South African colonist. The next comes from New South Wales:—"At present I am engaged in putting down a shaft. . . . I have found my home experience in blacksmiths' work and carpentry work very useful to me, as, for instance, in sharpening and mending mining tools and timbering, &c." Here is another:—"We have to do everything ourselves. . . . A veterinary surgeon would do well here, as hardly any one knows anything of veterinary work." A young fellow who had had a little practical instruction in geology became interested in that of his farm; the result was that he sent two or three lumps of rock to an analyst, and has now a thriving phosphate field of his own. Another, with much the same education in the industrial application of the principles of geology, lately discovered a gold reef in New South Wales. He writes home with the liveliest sense of the value of such an education.

I hope these brief echoes of experience may bring conviction to the doubters. To the general public they will show that these young fellows, having realised the actual state of things in the Colonies, are right in urging the value of some preparation for a colonial career. And so I repeat, —before emigration, education.

This education should be mainly

agricultural and industrial; the time devoted to books should not exceed an hour and a half a day. We cannot serve two masters, and the physical work of the colonial cadet will not allow much purely mental application. Moreover, this technical education would not begin until the time when a boy would usually leave school, say seventeen. If in the course of his ordinary school education he has gained some culture, has learnt, let me suppose, to admire his Homer or his Horace, his Shakespeare or his Goethe; if he appreciates the history of his nation, and is sufficient master of mathematics to work out some simple problems connected with the laws of leverage and energy, and if, above all, he has acquired the habit of industry which shows that "Dogged does it," and has left school with an interest in knowledge, then he has had an education which is sound, which is fundamental in the sense that he can proceed from it to almost anything. But he has had no technical education; he has not specialised for his work in life. That must now follow.

In the daily hour and a half that I would allot to book-work, the leading principles and applications of industrial geology and botany, of agriculture, forestry, building construction and veterinary practice could well be summarised and mastered during a two years' course. This, with the miscellaneous reading which any one interested in a subject can always find time for, would be sufficient for all practical purposes. But the main work would lie in the fields and in the shops. The practice of agriculture, the care and breeding of livestock and dairy-work, are so very important that the value of a knowledge of them can hardly be exaggerated. Then would come smiths', carpenters', joiners',—I have known men in the Colonies who made their own furniture and made it well—wheelwrights' and harness-makers' work. The object of all this is not to turn out finished workmen, that is obviously impos-

sible, but so to train young fellows in the elementary practice of these arts that they can shoe their horses, forge tires and bolts, make and mend gates and fences, and keep their houses, barns and waggons in repair; and, if not to make their harness, at least to be able to mend it. In short, they should be fit to meet and deal with any one of those emergencies which so commonly arise in colonial life.

Can all this be acquired in a couple of years? I reply that it has been done over and over again. I have seen young fellows on the eve of emigration who could do all that I have just stated as necessary, and who, two years before, were not only unable to do any one of these things, but had not even the most elementary acquaintance with the uses and nature of materials.

The purely agricultural part of the training would naturally be introductory. "It takes seven years to make a farmer," and there are some who say that a farmer is born and not made. But in the space of two years, while living on a farm large enough to exhibit the main aspects of farm-work, a knowledge of the processes of plant-growth and cultivation can be acquired, and a practical acquaintance with them can be gained which will be useful all the world over. The cadet will, under the systematic guidance I have in view, be led to inquire into the reason of things and the natural laws which influence and limit the direction of man's industry. For example, there are few things more important to the colonist than the ability to distinguish between fertile and barren soil. Few things, too, require a more judicious mixture of experience and knowledge. Perhaps the most certain test is the prevailing kind of vegetation which grows wild on the land. There are certain well-ascertained grasses and plants which are known to be unproductive, and they testify that the land on which they grow, even though it be luxuriantly, is unproductive too. How often has an inexperienced colonist bought

land which would take all his capital and never pay him any interest! Again, our old friend Varro tells us that when trees are stunted, gnarled and moss-grown, the soil which supports them is poor; when the stems are lofty and straight and the bark smooth, the soil is rich. Of course there are exceptions to this ancient rule, but a comparatively short experience will demonstrate them; this experience, I maintain, may be acquired by a lad who has learnt to use his eyes and brains, to observe and reflect, during two years of properly ordered farm-life.

Again, in keeping stock, in breeding and rearing horses, cattle, and sheep, there is hardly anything more important for the farmer, nothing more important for the rancher, than the ability to detect, after a cursory examination, whether it will be possible to produce muscle in this or that horse and meat and fat in this or that bullock. He must first ascertain this, and then he must know how to produce the muscle or the meat. A grazier, by rule of thumb, will tell you whether a "beast" will fatten or not; and, by the same rule, will select those foods which will help to that end. But if that grazier found himself in a new country, it is highly improbable that he would choose the right food, for he has no acquaintance with the chemical nature of food or of its influence on the functional powers of the animal. It is precisely here and under such a test that some knowledge of scientific breeding, breeding based on physiology and the chemistry of plant-food, makes all the difference; and such knowledge is easily gained in the two years' course I have suggested.

In this connection, also, one meets with veterinary science. It has been often said that the experience of a farm, even if large and well-stocked, will not afford practical illustration of the theory of veterinary science. My reply is that I know of a well-stocked and well-managed farm where the following diseases, among others, were

dealt with in the space of a few months:—congestion of the lungs, nasal catarrh, colic, inflammation of the uterus, milk-fever, garget (inflammation of the udder), ophthalmia, grease, formation of splints and side-bones, thrush, laminitis, cracked heels, corns, strangles, &c., together with various "injuries." Merely to witness the diagnosing and treatment of these diseases would be a training of the highest value to the young fellow who is going to keep stock in a wild country. And an acquaintance with the chief parasites and their evil work would have saved many a fortune in the past, would save many a one still. Supposing the sheep farmer knew how to detect and deal with *Strongylus Filaria*, how many a lambing season would pass by without wholesale loss; how many a sturdy young flock would be saved which last year, this year, has been lost!

Again, in practical and agricultural geology, next perhaps in importance to the knowledge of soils is that which relates to wells; where to look for water, how to look for it. Many a flock of sheep in Australia has perished of drought when water, abundant water, lay only a few feet below them. Ignorance of the permeability and impermeability of strata,—and the relation of the one to the other constitutes Nature's waterpipes—has led to catastrophe over and over again. The same ignorance has also involved a ridiculous expenditure in sinking wells. Men have been known to bore down hundreds of feet for water and at last found it—as brine! This is a good example of the close connection of the quality of water with the character of the strata through which it passes. But even some practical knowledge of well-sinking, of the limits of surface-contamination, of the methods of digging and boring and steining, is very important. Even the knowledge of the Abyssinian tube has been worth some hundreds of pounds to many a sheep-farmer.

And so I might run through the

whole course of a practical preparation for the Colonies, were it not likely to become tedious and defeat the object I have in view. There are, however, two subjects, rather beyond the ordinary range of an agricultural education, that, in my opinion, are essential to the safety and healthfulness of a colonial life. The first is a good knowledge of "first aid" principles and ambulance work; and the second is a working acquaintance with plain cookery. Few colonists are within a day's ride of a medical man, yet how often is a collar-bone, a leg or an arm broken; how still more frequently does one meet with the sprains and wounds which require careful bandaging and dressing if they are not to become dangerous. Many a limb has been rendered useless to its owner, indeed many a life has been lost through ignorance of what is understood by "first aid" of ambulance work. "It seems to me," says Lord Knutsford, "that that might possibly be, next to shoeing horses, the most useful thing the young colonist could learn."

When it is remembered that this young colonist lives either by himself or with two or three others of like kidney, that they not only make their own beds and sweep their own floors, but also cook their own food, it becomes obvious that in order to live in a wholesome manner they must be able to cook that food in a wholesome way. And this art is not so easily picked up by untutored experience, for the very simple reason that after several ghastly attempts to produce a palatable dish, the cook of the Bush falls back upon tinned meats and preserved salmon. I have met with men who never cooked a vegetable for months at a stretch and habitually ate their tinned meat cold. The only heated food, if food it can be called, that passed their lips was tea, coffee, and toddy. I remember once offering to assist an ambitious colonist-cook in the making of a breakfast-dish, but as I was a guest he would not hear of it. Believe me, that breakfast

took two hours to prepare! Upon several occasions I have eaten of the bread of the gentleman-baker; its specific gravity is ponderous. I have attacked steak-pies when I might just as well have tilted at windmills; the crust would have made stirrup-leathers and the meat macadamised the track. And then the monotony of the bill of fare; no stews, no hashes, no puddings, no tarts; nothing but plain roast or boiled which, according to my experience, means being burnt to a cinder or done to a rag! Now a few lessons in plain cookery would help a youth, cast adrift in the bush and for the first time in his life without the resources of a household at his back, to cook his meat palatably, to make a soup, a stew, and a hash by the old and simple mode of "resurrecting"; to stew fruit and make preserves; and even to turn out moderately light plain pastry, in other words, to eat wholesomely and with a palate. I repeat that such instruction should form an integral part of any education for the Colonies.

How curious it is that the parent who pays a hundred or so a year for the instruction of his son in subjects he will hasten to forget when he embarks on his new life, who will equip him even richly in the matter of outfit, of riding-boots and revolvers, never seems to realise that the boy is going to a country where his comfort, his health, even his life depend on his own knowledge of some common things. Surely the parent who removes his boy from the school where he has paid £100 a year for him to have the inestimable advantage of beginning Greek, and who, without providing any special preparation, sends him straightway out to a colonial life, must be a very conspicuous instance of the man who not only, like the knave, fails to do his duty, but, like the fool, knows not where duty lies. Yet the parent is not only to blame. There are the professional educators to whom he might reasonably look for help. They

are dumb dogs ; not a word of warning from them, not a single suggestion. They at least ought to know that a special training is as essential to the colonist as to the doctor, the lawyer, the priest. But no,—they are dumb dogs all. And to-day you may go into the saloons of Canada, and into the great cities of Australia, and find in the drunken ruin of a man the excellent fellow whom you knew so well at school ; and when you learn the history of his failure, you will agree with me that he is the product of his education, begotten by his father and his schoolmaster. Many an able, high-spirited lad has gone forth to the western world, or sailed down the southern seas to the island-continent at our feet, as unfitted to face the new life, to accept the new conditions,

as a child which has strayed from the mother's knee. And this is why I cannot put it too strongly that that nurture which is not controlled by common-sense can be, and is, more cruel than neglect ; that the experience of many a young colonist is the discovery, when he is crying aloud for bread, that his parents and his schoolmasters have put into his hand a stone. In the struggle for existence in the Colonies many a man is dragged down and trampled on ; and in numberless cases that which drags him down is his own want of any training for the struggle. Battling bravely but vainly with the rough waves of life, he sinks, simply and solely because he has not been taught to swim.

ARTHUR MONTEFIORE.

THE REAL HISTORIAN.

THERE was a time when the Muse of History moved in the halls of monarchs with regal pomp and splendour, with retinue of cardinals and princes, with blare of heralds' trumpets and clank of knightly steel; when she watched the champions break their lances in the lists, or the pilgrim wending home his painful way, or the fair damsels plying their needles in turret of medieval castle, or the gay lady riding to the chase with falcon on her wrist, or the fat monk gloating over the refectory table. There was an earlier time when she wrote on waxen tablet the repulse of the Eastern by the waking Western world, when she applauded the tragedies of Æschylus or the harangues of Pericles, when she explored the mysteries of the land of old Nile, when she traced with potent finger the achievements of mighty kings upon the surface of the living rock. And there was a later time when amid roar of cannon and thunder of rushing hoofs, amid cheer of victory and cry of despair, amid all the horror and glory of war, the Muse, with high and lofty look, beheld the death-grapple of mighty nations, traced the devastating career of superb ambition, and placed the laurel on the victor's brow, or sat with diplomatists in council and signed success away. But now she has laid aside her royal robes; she has dismissed her splendid train; she has become clear, cold, prosaic, and precise; she does nothing now but sit before a table strewn with Acts of Parliament to study the British Constitution. Warriors and adventurers, kings and courtiers, poets and philosophers were erst her companions. Now she cares for no one who is not a lawyer or a member of Parliament. She is wasted to a skeleton. She has grown blear-eyed, and has lost her

beauty. What is worse, she has grown short-sighted too, and no longer sees or marks much that she was wont to see and mark in the days of her prime.

Now the history of the British Constitution is good. To trace the successive steps by which the sovereignty has passed from the king to the nobles, from the nobles to the people, from the people to the mob is interesting, valuable, and instructive. To investigate the mode in which the vast and complex fabric of Parliamentary institutions has developed is a legitimate task for an historian. But he must not call his work the History of England. It is because the standard modern work which bears this proud title on its cover is nothing more or less than the history of the development of the Constitution, accompanied by the thinnest possible narrative of facts, that this protest is penned. We are fully sensible of the author's many merits. It is to his school of thought, not to himself, that we take exception. We believe that history is on a wrong tack; and if our views of legitimate history be correct, then is Mrs. Markham more of a genuine historian than Dr. Bright.

A First Class man in the Final History Schools will tell you that "Macaulay and Carlyle are very good in their way. One should read them, of course. But it is not history." What then is history?

History has been defined as the biography of great men. The definition is absurdly inadequate; but, like many such epigrammatic phrases, it has a germ of truth. At certain epochs in the experience of mankind it has been tolerably correct. The biography of Cæsar for the last three or four years of his life is the history for the time of the Roman Empire. The record of

the lives of Henry the Eighth and Cardinal Wolsey is the history of the reign of Henry the Eighth. The biography of Napoleon, from the time he became First Consul to his abdication, is the history of the French people. So long as history was regarded as a succession of wars, the great figure of a conqueror filled the whole stage, and there was nothing more to know. But wars are not the whole of history any more than Acts of Parliament are. What then should the History of England be? By your leave, beardless Bachelors of Arts, and newly-elected Fellows of All Souls, let Macaulay speak.

The history of England is emphatically the history of progress. It is the history of a constant movement of the public mind, of a constant change in the institutions of a great society. We see that society, at the beginning of the twelfth century, in a state more miserable than the state in which the most degraded nations of the East now are. We see it subjected to the tyranny of a handful of armed foreigners. We see a strong distinction of caste separating the victorious Norman from the vanquished Saxon. We see the great body of the population in a state of personal slavery. We see the most debasing and cruel superstition exercising boundless dominion over the most elevated and benevolent minds. We see the multitude sunk in brutal ignorance, and the studious few engaged in acquiring what did not deserve the name of knowledge. In the course of seven centuries the wretched and degraded race have become the greatest and most civilised people that ever the world saw, have spread their dominion over every quarter of the globe, have scattered the seeds of mighty empires and republics over vast continents of which no dim intimation had ever reached Ptolemy or Strabo, have created a maritime power which would annihilate in a quarter of an hour the navies of Tyre, Athens, Carthage, Venice, and Genoa together, have carried the science of healing, the means of locomotion and correspondence, every mechanical art, every manufacture, everything that promotes the convenience of life, to a perfection which our ancestors would have thought magical, have produced a literature which may boast of works not inferior to the noblest which Greece has bequeathed to us, have dis-

covered the laws which regulate the motions of the heavenly bodies, have speculated with exquisite subtilty on the operations of the human mind, have been the acknowledged leaders of the human race in the career of political improvement. The history of England is the history of this great change in the moral, intellectual and physical state of the inhabitants of our own island.

Truly, to record the "history of this great change in the moral, intellectual and physical state" of the English race were a task for the noblest brain that even England herself should ever produce, a task to be undertaken with humility and pride, humility on account of inadequacy for the work, pride to be thought worthy to attempt it. Why then do modern historians refuse to trace the moral change, the physical change, or the intellectual change, and virtually confine themselves to constitutional change? It is as though a man should walk through the midst of the loveliest scenery with looks bent only on the straight high road, and eyes that only mark the mile-stones by the way. The historic landscape is full of beauty; vista after vista opens into the picturesque past; yet these plodding intellectual pedestrians pursue their laborious way along the arid and dusty track of constitutional development, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left.

It may be doubted whether it be right, in any sense, to make so prominent a feature of constitutional change. Acts of Parliament have the smallest possible influence upon the real life of the nation. That an Act of Parliament can turn a man out of a public-house but cannot make him sober, has become a truism. *Quid leges sine moribus vanae proficiunt?* The reason is sufficiently clear. The Act of Parliament is itself an effect and not a cause. It is a conclusion, not a beginning. It initiates nothing. It defines in words and reduces to writing the formless principle that has gradually grown to maturity in the mind of the community. Constitutional change is

but the outcome of the "change in the moral, intellectual, and physical state of the inhabitants of our own island." It is simply the manifestation of that mysterious, heterogeneous, complex, irresistible force known as public opinion. The senatorial decree, it is true, is formulated and promulgated at Westminster; but it has been debated, voted, and passed long since in the heart of the whole country.

There is, of course, a narrative in these Constitutional Histories. It is a clear but rapid stream, running with an even and steady current, broken by no roguish ripples, enlivened by no brilliant sparkles, toying with no flowers, chequered by no light and shade. The events recorded in brief opposite the dates in our pocket almanacs are not more free from decent adornment. *Mar. 26, D. of Cambridge d. 1819. Mar. 28, D. of Albany d. 1884. Mar. 30, Sicilian Vespers, 1282.* Why, that one passage in Carlyle's *French Revolution* about the Bastille Clock does more to bring before our minds a great historical event than anything between the title-page and the conclusion of Dr. Bright's volumes. Let us quit for a moment the closing nineteenth century, let us go back a hundred years, let us cling to the skirts of the magician and suffer ourselves to be transported straight into the very thick and turmoil of the greatest social convulsion that the modern world has known. We are in the midst of the living tide that surges round the great dark fortress; we hear the rattle of aimless musketry, the cries of vengeance, the shrieks of despair; we see the eight grim towers upraising their wicked heads above the eddy smoke; we see fire bursting from buildings in the outer courts; we hear the clank of axes, the thunder of great guns.

How the great Bastille Clock ticks (inaudible) in its Inner Court there, at its ease, hour after hour, as if nothing special for it, or the world, were passing! It tolled One when the firing began, and is now pointing towards Five, and still the

firing slakes not. Far down, in their vaults, the seven Prisoners hear muffled din as of earthquakes; their Turnkeys answer vaguely.

Wo to thee, De Launay, with thy poor hundred Invalides! Broglie is distant, and his ears heavy; Besenval hears, but can send no help. One poor troop of Hussars has crept, reconnoitring, cautiously along the Quais as far as the Pont Neuf. "We are come to join you," said the Captain; for the crowd seems shoreless. A large-headed dwarfish individual, of smoke-bleared aspect, shambles forward, opening his blue lips, for there is sense in him; and croaks: "Alight then, and give up your arms!" The Hussar-Captain is, too happy to be escorted to the Barriers, and dismissed on parole. Who the squat individual was? Men answer, It is M. Marat, author of the excellent pacific *Avis au Peuple!* Great truly, O thou remarkable Dogleech, is this thy day of emergence and new-birth: and yet this same day come four years!—But let the curtains of the Future hang.

What a picture! Let us now relate the same events in the approved modern style.

The attack commenced at one o'clock, and at five it still showed no sign of abating. The seven prisoners inquired from their gaolers the cause of the disturbance, but received vague replies. De Launay had only a hundred Invalides under his command. No help could come from Broglie, who was too far distant, or from Besenval. A troop of Hussars reconnoitred along the Quais as far as the Pont Neuf; but finding themselves hopelessly outnumbered, fraternised with the mob, and having given up their arms, were escorted to the barriers and dismissed. This was done on the suggestion of Marat, a veterinary surgeon, who had written a book called *Avis au Peuple*, and who, four years subsequently, became one of the chief personages in the worst period of the Revolution.

Lest the reader should suppose I have caricatured an imaginary baldness of style, I append Dr. Bright's description of the siege of Derry, an event not usually regarded as devoid of striking and picturesque incident. Of the heroic Walker, he merely says, "The inhabitants . . . appointed Walker, a clergyman, and Major Henry

Baker, joint governors." How the men of Derry preached and prayed, with cannon on the roof of their Cathedral and gunpowder in its vaults, how wives and sisters stood behind the defenders and loaded muskets for them, how every one of those hundred and five days had its heroic achievement, and its not less heroic endurance of want and privation, how the stout old parson sallied forth from the gates and rescued his hard-pressed friends, how they fired brick-bats coated with lead through dearth of ammunition, how happened any of the thousand and one striking incidents which marked the course of "this great siege, the most memorable in the annals of the British Isles," we learn not from Dr. Bright. This is his description of the relief of the city.

The fate of Londonderry and Enniskillen was watched with absorbing interest. A fleet, with some troops under command of Kirke, was at length despatched, but Kirke refused to risk the passage of the river which led from Lough Foyle, and which was now guarded by forts and a boom, and the starving population of Londonderry had the misery of watching the ships as they lay idly in the Lough At length, in July, the fate of Londonderry seemed sealed. Nearly everything eatable had been devoured—horse-flesh, rats, salt hides, all that could possibly be converted even into the most objectionable food. It seemed impossible to feed the population in any way for two days longer. At last a peremptory order reached Kirke to relieve the city at all hazards. On the 30th of July three vessels, two transports and a frigate, sailed up the river, and after a few minutes of difficulty, broke the boom, and in the evening, at ten o'clock, were anchored at the quay. The city was saved after 105 days of siege and blockade.

Now let us see what the relief of Derry really was. I admit that Dr. Bright is comparatively limited for space. But he calls his book the *History of England*; and unless he writes real history he has no right to arrogate to his work that proud and splendid title. Call it a phase of the history of England, and there is no

more to be said. Here is Macaulay's description.

Among the merchant ships which had come to Lough Foyle under his [Kirke's] convoy was one called the *Mountjoy*. The master, Micaiah Browning, a native of Londonderry, had brought from England a large cargo of provisions. He had, it is said, repeatedly protested against the inaction of the armament. He now eagerly volunteered to take the first risk of succouring his fellow-citizens; and his offer was accepted. Andrew Douglas, master of the *Phœnix*, who had on board a great quantity of meal from Scotland, was willing to share the danger and the honour. The two merchantmen were to be escorted by the *Dartmouth* frigate of thirty-six guns, commanded by Captain John Leake, afterwards an admiral of great fame.

It was the twenty-eighth of July. The sun had just set; the evening sermon in the cathedral was over; and the heart-broken congregation had separated; when the sentinels on the tower saw the sails of three vessels coming up the Foyle. Soon there was a stir in the Irish camp. The besiegers were on the alert for miles along both shores. The ships were in extreme peril; for the river was low; and the only navigable channel ran very near to the left bank, where the head quarters of the enemy had been fixed, and where the batteries were most numerous. Leake performed his duty with a skill and spirit worthy of his noble profession, exposed his frigate to cover the merchantmen, and used his guns with great effect. At length the little squadron came to the place of peril. Then the *Mountjoy* took the lead, and went right at the boom. The huge boom cracked and gave way; but the shock was such that the *Mountjoy* rebounded, and stuck in the mud. A yell of triumph rose from the banks; the Irish rushed to their boats, and were preparing to board; but the *Dartmouth* poured on them a well-directed broadside, which threw them into disorder. Just then the *Phœnix* dashed at the breach which the *Mountjoy* had made, and was in a moment within the fence. Meantime the tide was rising fast. The *Mountjoy* began to move, and soon passed safe through the broken stakes and floating spars. But her brave-master was no more. A shot from one of the batteries had struck him; and he died by the most enviable of all deaths, in sight of the city which was his birthplace, which was his home, and which had just been saved by his courage and self-devotion.

from the most frightful form of destruction. The night had closed in before the conflict at the boom began ; but the flash of the guns was seen, and the noise heard, by the lean and ghastly multitude which covered the walls of the city. When the *Mountjoy* grounded, and when the shout of triumph rose from the Irish on both sides of the river, the hearts of the besieged died within them. One who endured the unutterable anguish of that moment has told us that they looked fearfully livid in each other's eyes. Even after the barricade had been passed, there was a terrible half-hour of suspense. It was ten o'clock before the ships arrived at the quay. The whole population was there to welcome them. A screen made of casks filled with earth was hastily thrown up to protect the landing-place from the batteries on the other side of the river ; and then the work of unloading began. First were rolled on shore barrels containing six thousand bushels of meal. Then came great cheeses, casks of beef, flitches of bacon, kegs of butter, sacks of pease and biscuit, ankers of brandy. Not many hours before, half a pound of tallow and three quarters of a pound of salted hide had been weighed out with niggardly care to every fighting man. The rations which each now received was three pounds of flour, two pounds of beef, and a pint of pease. It is easy to imagine with what tears grace was said over the suppers of that evening. There was little sleep on either side of the wall. The bonfires shone bright along the whole circuit of the ramparts. The Irish guns continued to roar all night ; and all night the bells of the rescued city made answer to the Irish guns with a peal of joyous defiance. Through the three following days the batteries of the enemy continued to play. But on the third night flames were seen arising from the camp : and, when the first of August dawned, a line of smoking ruins marked the site lately occupied by the huts of the besiegers ; and the citizens saw far off the long column of pikes and standards retreating up the left bank of the Foyle towards Strabane.

And now we know something about the relief of Derry. If it is not history, what is it ?

Not only does Dr. Bright neglect to avail himself of legitimate opportunities for vivid and striking relation of events ; he actually goes out of his way to avoid them. What shall we

say of a historian who relates the story of the Gordon Riots, and omits to mention that Newgate prison was stormed and burnt by the mob ? Why, Fry's *Illustrated Guide to London* is better history ! What shall we say of a historian who describes the battle of Trafalgar and omits Nelson's famous signal to his fleet, a message from the doomed hero not merely to his captains and their crews for that one day, but to his countrymen and their posterity for all time ? Can any one calculate the extent to which that proud and noble rule of conduct, declared amid so mournful and pathetic circumstances, has worked upon the English character ? Does the author of a history of England do well to leave that out ? We fancy that Nelson's declaration, illustrated and enforced by his own superb example, that to do his simple duty is the glory of an Englishman, has had quite as much practical effect upon the hearts and the actions of Englishmen, in every quarter of the globe, in every circumstance of danger and adventure, as seven-eighths of the Acts of Parliament that decorate the Statute Book. Was there no room for it in the volume of 1,472 pages that records the history of England from the accession of William the Third to our own time ?

The art of character drawing is wholly disdained by Dr. Bright. Of the graphic touch which charms us ever and anon in the pages of Sallust, of Tacitus, or of Thucydides, the touch that brings before us the very man as he lived and acted in his day, we are never treated to a specimen. It is not space that forbids. It did not cost Sallust many words to describe Catiline. "*Corpus patiens inedia, vigilia, algoris, supra quam cuiquam credibile est ; animus audax, subdolus, varius, cujus rei libet simulator ac dissimulator ; alieni appetens, sui profusus ; ardens in cupiditatibus ; satis eloquentia, sapientia parum.*" He possessed a frame that could dispense with food, rest and warmth to an incredible degree. His intellect was

daring, subtle, and many-sided. Placed in any situation whatever he could pretend to be what he was not, he could conceal what he was. He coveted his neighbour's goods, yet was lavish of his own. He was hot in his passions. Eloquence he had in plenty; wisdom he had none." Why the man moves before us. Are there no subjects for such sketches to be found in English history? Has there been no one who, like Sylla, was "*Cupidus voluptatum, sed gloriæ cupidior*, who loved pleasure much, but who loved honour more?" Did not the reign of Anne show forth its Alcibiades? Are not the famous figures of the past worthy to be adorned with a few descriptive lines? The Constitutional Historian seems to have stolen from his darling politics the motto "Measures not men," and to have applied the aphorism to a record that is vastly more concerned with men than measures. We feel sorry for the owner of any name that is mentioned in his pages. The poor bare proper noun stands there in a most improperly nude state, without a rag of an epithet to cover its nakedness. Yet if the poet with two or three adjectives can place before our imagination the picture of a vast and varied landscape, cannot the historian spare a word or two to give reality and life to the great figures of the past?

Calm and still light on yon great plain
That sweeps with all its autumn bowers,
And crowded farms and lessening towers,
To mingle with the bounding main.

The adjective is scarcely the enemy of the noun in that third line.

When we read history, we want to be told how the people were clothed, fed, housed; how they looked and spoke; how they thought and revelled; what manner of world it was in which they worked and loved and sighed and hoped from the cradle to the grave.

If the historian, for instance, proposes to write the record of the "spacious times of great Elizabeth," it should be his delight as well as his duty

to give a faithful picture of the epoch. He should show us the maid of honour with her ruff, the rhyming courtier with his padded hose, the bold adventurer on his solitary bark in the Spanish main, the gables of the Tudor manor-house rising amid the rook-thronged elms, the game of bowls on the Hoe at Plymouth while the Armada crept up Channel, the noble in his castle, the peasant in his hut, the poet and the playwright, the dance around the Maypole. For what reason are the amusements of the people to be excluded from history? In a man's own personal history, all that he lives of his life is lived in his pleasures. Sir Joshua Reynolds observed that the real character of a man was found out by his amusements. Dr. Johnson added, "Yes, sir; no man is a hypocrite in his pleasures." The dull routine of work goes on, day after day,—he lives not; the history of one week's work is the history of the next,—he lives not; he reads his paper, and marks that the political machine is creaking slowly, steadily as ever,—he lives not; only he lives during his few hours' daily freedom from his toil, and above all during those blessed periods of holiday when he can call the happy days his own. Let us then have a record of his pleasures as well as of his serious employments. Historians do not seem to know how intimately the life of a nation is affected by its pleasures and how infinitesimally by its politics. Does not the development of the race-horse deserve a place in the record of English life? If Wellington's battles were won on the playing-fields of Eton, has not the healthy English love of field-sports and games some bearing upon the moral and physical changes in the state of the race? How comes it that the Pall Mall dandy braves the bitter winter in the Crimean trenches? In the football-field, the grouse-moor, the hunting-field, must be sought the explanation why the rough-and-tumble, bird-killing, fox-hunting, cricket-playing, cool,

steady-nerved English race has won its way alike among Arctic snows and tropic heat, has conquered as well in Canada as in India, as well in Russia as in Egypt, has established its vast and splendid empire in every quarter of the globe.

Let History, then, forsake her muniment-room. Let not the Palace of Westminster close her whole horizon. Let her climb to Olympian heights, from whence she may discern the whole fair landscape, the peasant at the plough, the soldier at the war, the pioneer in the primeval forest, the inventor in his laboratory, the workman at the loom ; whence she may behold the ponderous locomotive distancing the wind, the electric-lit steamship ploughing through Atlantic storm, the gun that throws its missile seven miles ; whence she may see the noble's palace standing in his park, the cloud of smoke that overhangs the coal-field, the forest of masts in Liverpool or

London docks ; whence she may hear the whirr of machinery, the roar of furnaces, the hum of industrious production ; whence she may contemplate a liberty which affords an asylum to the oppressed of every nation, a charity which feeds the starving poor in the uttermost parts of the earth, a generosity which disdains to trample on a fallen foe, a large-hearted tolerance which is slow to be provoked, a strong and fearful vengeance which never falters or fails. Let her depict the steps by which this people has become the wonder, the envy, the admiration of the world ; let her exhibit the evolution of the Anglo-Saxon character, the development of its sterling qualities ; let her do justice to its commercial, its social, its moral, no less than its legislative achievements ; let her trace the mode in which the poor province of the Norman Conqueror has become the England that we love and venerate, the England of to-day.

A LESSON IN THRIFT.

We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.

I

ELIZABETH TURMITS was plodding on her way from the swede-field. At every step, her feet, which Nature had intended to be pretty and delicate feet (and which would have looked so clad in kid or French leather), plumped wearily up and down, gurgling in their bulky encasements. Now and again she paused to shift her basket, which she had filled, in passing, at the parish-shop, with flour and other necessities, from the right hip to the left, or *vice versa*. Evening was closing in, and a cold sleet was sprinkling her cotton bonnet and thin shawl of ambiguous hue. Far before her a curling white mist betokened the bed of the Lugg, and the damp of the meadows through which that sluggish stream pursues its way. But the immediate foreground showed only the road, thick in sludge and seemingly endless, between its low black hedges divided in places by a five-barred gate or a stile, with, at long intervals, a solitary cottage, its ruddy window deepening the gloom beyond.

Suddenly she moved to the right, one foot in the ditch, to avoid a rapid little pony-cart which dashed unexpectedly round a corner, its flashing lamps revealing a driver in a white stock and low-crowned hat and a keen-faced layman on the lower seat at his side.

"Mrs. Turmits! Hallo!" and the rough pony was pulled up on his restless haunches. "Why, you're going the wrong way! You got my notice particularly inviting all you wives and mothers to the lecture?"

Elizabeth Turmits dropped an old-fashioned curtsey. "Yes, sir, thank you kindly. Please, sir, 'im be a going. *Me*, I sha'n't have no time, not

to clean me, an' see to the little uns an' get up to the school by 'alf past seven, an' all. I 'a been pulling swedes, sir, at the Ox Pasture."

"The Ox Pasture! My good soul, what are you thinking of? Field-work at that distance from home!"

"Please, sir, it be all our master's land. Mr. Acres, his men's wives be bound to work."

"But can you never get a day off? An important lecture like this! Quite as important, to say the least, for you women as for your husbands."

"Please, sir, be it 'ow it may, I must get Saturdays. An' there be a sight o' swedes. An' we wants to get 'em pulled afore the sharp frosts sets in. An' Mr. Acres, sir, he be that arbitrary; 'im 'ud say as soon as look at yer, 'If Tom Turmits an' his missis don't care for the place, there's plenty as 'ool.' An' then where 'ud we be, sir? an' our little uns treading one on another's 'eels, so to speak."

"Well, good evening, Mrs. Turmits. But you remember, now,—'Where there's a will, there's a way.'"

The new vicar lashed the eager pony somewhat imprudently; and away sped the little cart towards the Board Schools. Elizabeth Turmits dropped another curtsey, and meekly resumed her journey in the opposite direction.

"These people seem all but hopeless," observed the vicar. His past experiences had been acquired, first, in a model village ruled by a Lady Bountiful and a rich rector; secondly, at a cathedral town, where he had sung in the choir, taught mathematics to the lower forms of the college school, assisted plentifully at amateur concerts, with a due proportion of dinner-parties, quiet suppers, golf, and lawn-tennis, and taken occasional duty for sick or absent clergy, upon the usual

terms of a guinea per service and his cab-hire. The minor canons having in turn refused the straggling country parish where he now found himself, its patrons, the Dean and Chapter, had utilized the occasion to promote their favourite choral vicar; who had come primed with decided theories and a friendly contempt for his easy-going predecessor, now reposing at a lighter and more lucrative post, while his boots still perambulated his late haunts upon the industrious feet of Mrs. Turmits.

"It is positively impossible to stir them up on any subject whatever. That woman, now! Their excuses sound very plausible; but I make it a point not to listen to them. I give always that one answer,—I am convinced of its truth—'Where there's a will, there's a way.'"

"Quite so," assented the lecturer on Thrift; "they'll find it true when compulsion comes. Compulsion will have to come, you know; they're like animals, the future has no existence for them. I hope your guardians are firm in refusing outdoor relief; you clergy may do a good deal by setting your faces resolutely in that way. The refusal may cause some suffering temporarily; but we shall soon reap the benefit. A few corns of wheat must always drop off, you see, before one can get the harvest. However, I'll do my best to stir them to-night, and 'Im's coming at least; so we'll be hopeful."

And the pony-cart drove on with renewed ardour, regardless of the mud that splashed its sides.

II.

MEANWHILE Elizabeth Turmits by dint of patient plodding had at length reached her home; a roadside cottage, close to the gate (sorely in need of paint) which led to the farm-precincts of Mr. Acres, the largest ratepayer in the parish.

"'Im be well enough, but, you mind! you mustn't cross 'im," had

been a fellow-workman's warning, when Thomas Turmits entered the service. Thenceforth, to avoid that catastrophe had been with Thomas, and with Elizabeth likewise, a principal object in life; for frequent moves, involving loss of time, where time meant wages and wages existence, to say nothing of the wear and tear of furniture, would be to them a serious evil. Bill aged eight, Jack aged seven, Tommy aged six, Ben aged four and a half, Dick aged three and three months, Alice aged two, and the baby just beginning to toddle, were all solid arguments for the advisability of on no account crossing Mr. Acres. So Thomas bore patiently with the "tantrums" for which that autocrat was chiefly renowned, and took care to support his politics at the election, and when the parson (him of the boots) had said to him, in an *Et-tu-Brute* tone, "Why, Thomas! you for Home Rule?" he had answered apologetically with a meek touch of his thick forefinger to his forehead, "You see, sir, our master, him don't ask what we be for, or what we bain't for, so long as us votes his way." Elizabeth also bowed her head to a stern decree forbidding pigs and fowls on the workmen's premises, and endured all manner of discomforts in the cottage, which was old and often needed repairs, sooner than "worrit" the master. "It'll be time enough to pick an' choose when the babies stops coming," she said; "us must ruggle on, the best us can, till then."

The cottage, outwardly, was picturesque, crossed with beams of black timber forming squares filled in with cream-coloured plastering. The thatch had lately been mended, after a year's submission to the inroads of snow and rain, and the bright yellow of the new straw contrasted strangely with the murky hues of the rest. But contrast and hues alike were hidden by darkness as Elizabeth Turmits turned in, at the wicket-gate and raised the wooden latch of the rickety door beyond which her children awaited

her. A few red embers glowed dimly, from the wide old grate, upon six small heads of varying height; also upon a wickerwork perambulator, wherein, beneath miscellaneous coverings, slumbered that tyrant the baby, and which some years ago a second-hand dealer had exchanged, as serving a double purpose, for the wooden cradle.

"Why, there now, mother's come back to you, and you be good little lads, as ever was, a sitting here so quiet! An' Alice too, her mother's pet, her be. Here, Bill! you unlace my boots; I'se that tired!"

She sank upon the hard settle, aching in every limb; aching, and empty, and cold, and looked about her. "My! what a confusion this room be in! Where's your daddy? Oh, gone to the lecture, sure. Here, Jack, you come to my boots, and, Bill, get the lamp, there's a good lad. Where's the matches? That fire ain't hot enough to kindle a dry shaving. Be the kettle full, Bill? I feels no life in me, somehow; I sha'n't be right till I gets me a cup o' tea."

"Daddy told we not to put on no coals, not till you did come home," said red-cheeked Bill.

"No, nor then; I'll keep 'em till it be time to get his supper. Billy, go to the back kitchen, an' bring us a bit o' wood, that as I gathered in the field; it'll boil the kettle. That be right, lad. Them boots, they steams like engines! an' my legs be that stiff! When I was a silly girl, I was used to laugh at the rheumatics. Don't never none o' you boys laugh! What is it, my Alice? Why, you be ready to drop, so you be! A poor little lass, forced to wait for her bad mother! You come along, my darling, I'll get you to bed; an' you, my Ben an' Dicky, lads, come your ways! Never mind my tea till I've put 'em comfortable, Bill. Come on, the lot on ye, all but Bill an' Jack."

She disappeared up the short, steep staircase, dragging her weary limbs by force of will. What though she

had been pulling turnips all day, and had walked home afterwards a mile and a half, with a heavy basket, in the sleet; if the children wanted rest, what of that? She tucked them all in; the older boys in a large bed at the head of the stair, where presently Bill and Jack would join them; the younger, with Alice, in the room, which held two beds, opening therefrom. The cottage had no other bedroom.

"You do look white, mother!" said Bill, when she returned.

"I feels white, lad. But you've got the kettle boiling, good little chap! I'll soon be better. An' now, you an' Jack, you go on up after the rest; else you won't be fit for school, an' they'll summons poor father: Mr. Kane, he be that resolute! I'll do well enough now, my lads. You sleep sound; and when I've had me a drop o' tea, I'll undress baby."

The little fellow stumbled up the wooden stair; and once more the mother, left alone, looked helplessly around her.

Elizabeth Turmits was no ideal housewife. Her mother, like herself, had spent much time in compulsory field-work; little, with equal ability, remained to instruct her girls after the method of industrious cottagers in model story-books. Elizabeth had been trained, with due threatenings of "the stick," in honesty and truth; for the rest, imitation and necessity had been her teachers. At twelve she had gone to service as maid-of-all-work in the busy, scrambling household of a small tradesman; and place after place of the same kind had employed her girlhood until the time of her marriage to Thomas Turmits.

Now, therefore, when she had spent four continuous days among the swedes, returning only for a hurried half-hour at dinner-time, and at night tired to death, the state of the one living-room may be best imagined by those who know what their own rooms, somewhat differently furnished, become if the mistress of the house

be ill or absent, the servants (and Elizabeth Turmits had no servants) inefficient, and boy-children in overwhelming majority.

The floor, ill-paved with fissures between the bricks, bore witness to the condition of the roads. The wooden chairs, the table in the window, the dresser with its shelves and drawers, were not only thick in dust, but piled with heterogeneous articles, from a broken "crock" and a string of cotton reels, with which Dick and Alice had been playing, to the baby's gnawed carrot and Thomas Turmits's corduroy waistcoat set aside for mending; not to mention a roll of Elizabeth's hurden aprons, which awaited time and the wash-tub.

"It do all want tidying fit to break anybody's heart," she thought, sighing, as she sipped her tea. "My work be cut out for Saturday! But a must make it a bit comfortabler like to-night, or he'll think he'd be better off at the public."

So she utilized the strength won from the tea (albeit stewed) to drag herself to her feet, and was moving towards the over-burdened dresser, when a sturdy cry arose. The imperious baby, who was teething, had to be taken up, cosseted, fed, and then prepared for the night; afterwards Elizabeth, having deposited it upstairs, lest her husband's return should re-awaken it, found herself literally powerless for further labours. She could only bring the corduroy waistcoat to her round table beside the smouldering fire, and occupy the hour before preparing her husband's supper in the concoction of a somewhat clumsy patch. Now and then her eyes roamed thoughtfully from her work to the boots still drying on the hearth.

"I doubt another week of it 'ull split 'em," she murmured, shaking her head. "If the old parson was here, he'd have another pair ready for me by now. But this new un, I can't bring myself to ask him. Folks says he don't hold wi' giving, thinks it do's harm, or something. I reckons it do's

worse harm to go barefoot! Suppose he was set down here, in this chair where I be, wi' ten shillings in his pocket, an' them blessed seven little uns upstairs to say nothing of 'im to find for, for a week! An' nought to fall back on, but my eightpence, this week five days, an' that week three days, maybe, in the fields, an' half o' that took out, I knows, in wear an' tear; what 'ud him feel like? He'd think twice afore he talked any more about a bit of a gift, now an' again, doing poor bodies harm! But there now, poor young man, how can he tell, as have no wife, and no chick nor child? An' taught, may be, by them that reared him, as us working folk be made of different stuff, like, to hisself! It be my belief some of 'em thinks as we could live on grass, if we'd a mind! The parsons did ought to be all married. Married men be more feeling; and they *knows*. But whatever be I to do? Bill and Jack well nigh barefoot, an' bound to go, the mile an' more, to school regular, if it was ever so! There's a'most enough for Bill's pair in the cracked teapot. Me, I'll have to bide; I must make shift a while longer, if it cripples me."

III.

"THEY calls it The National Insurance Scheme. Our parson, him be took up wi' it uncommon. Him be all for we beginning at once, wi'out waiting for Government, an' putting by so much a week; young uns least, an' old uns most. It appears he've been off, to London, to Sir John, as owns a sight o' land i' these parts, though we never sees him; an' they 'a put their heads together, an' between 'em they 'a made out a plan, as we on Sir John's lands as begins at once, shall get our share, whether or no us be over the Government age. Sir John an' the parson, they'll see to it; the parson, him be treasurer. That there lecturer, him explained it all. I 'on't say as I rightly took it in, not the whole on it;

but his figures was wonderful clear Sir John, he be rich enough to buy up the kingdom; an' him have pledged his word. It'll be as safe as the clubs, for them as can put into it."

Elizabeth had prepared her husband's supper, of boiled bacon, onions, and greens, a savoury mess such as Thomas Turmits's soul loved. The kitchen looked more comfortable; the lamp was turned up to its full height; the fire had at least some warmth, wherein Elizabeth was basking seated upon a three-legged stool. In her hand was a short clay pipe, which she was clearing with the aid of a twig, preparatory to replenishing it with strong tobacco, for Thomas's refreshment by and by. She still ached from head to foot, and thought with comfortable anticipation of her bed; but she would not, even for new boots, far less new legs, have hurried Thomas, who, knife in hand, was making the most of his meal and his leisure, and talking slowly, a pause after each sentence.

"Parson wanted me to join to-night; him were taking down names. But I says, 'No, sir, thank 'ee, not to-night; I must mention it to my missis.' Him looked put about terrible, as more o' we married ones didn't join; but, as I says to Joe Williams, 'There be a deal,' I says, 'as wants considering. I must talk it over with my missis,' I says. Thirty-one year! it'll be thirty-one year till I be's sixty-five. Us might all be dead and buried afore then. I 'a found out why our parson don't hold wi' giving, however."

"And why, pray?" asked Elizabeth, poking hard at an obstinate bit of ash in the pipe.

"It be all along o' ignorance. Him says gifts makes beggars an' slaves of us; him wants us all to be independent, same as he, an' paddle our own canoes, like. Joe Williams, he were sat next me, an' he nudges me, an' says, 'All right,' he says, 'I be quite agreeable; only my canoe have got a hole in the bottom, an' none o' my tools 'll mend

it,' he says. 'God helps them as helps theirselves,' says the parson. 'You put by,' he says, 'you scrape an' scrat all you can; an' at sixty-five, when you 'a worked till you can work no longer, an' your eyes be dim, an' your frame be wore out wi' rheumatics from the clay soil,' he says, 'you'll have, it may be two shillin', it may be three shillin', for a few years more, till your old bones drops into the ground you've tilled for the gentry,' he says."

"What! did the parson use them words? 'Scrape and scrat,' an' 'wore out wi' rheumatics'?"

"I be telling you wrong, my girl; now I thinks on it, it were Joe Williams said that. Him were holding forth, after, in the road, a making fun for young fools; I hearkened a moment, an' come on, 'cause I knowed as you'd be waiting. What the parson said were about God Almighty helping them as do's the best they can for theirselves, an' doesn't hang on to others."

"An' don't us do the best us can for ourselves? Don't you an' me, any way?" returned Elizabeth plaintively. "If us didn't, it 'ud be a poor tale! Because there be lazy-bones as begs an' won't work, an' then drinks away that as they begged for, must the gentry grudge so much as an old pair o' boots to honest folks as toils their life out? The parson thinks as we be all the same. An' why do he think it? I can show you, in Bill's old copies."

She rose stiffly, and from the chaotic mass upon the dresser disinterred the soiled remnant of an exercise-book. "Can you read them words, Tom? They be nice and plain."

Thomas Turmits read, aided by his finger, in Bill's round hand, — *A Little Knowledge Is A Dangerous Thing*.

"That be it!" said Elizabeth, re-seating herself. "The new parson an' a sight more o' his kind, they knows us poor folk a little, I don't deny. Some says him be even again' the Clothing Club bonus. Well! all as

is, if us must look to nought but our wages, us ought to be better paid."

"An' how be the masters to pay better? That I will say for 'em," observed Thomas; "a many has pretty hard work to find their own rent. It do seem to me, when I considers, like, as the Government might help a bit, when it be we as works the land an' all. Them rich folk, from Her Majesty down'ards, they eats a sight o' bread, first to last, you may depend, an' flour according; an' their horses eats a sight o' oats. Where 'ud 'em be, if us didn't plough an' sow an' get in the harvests for 'em?"

"Tom, you mind as you knocks out the ashes next time," said Elizabeth, neatly packing the clay bowl. "Here, I've filled him all right for you to smoke while I clears away. I wonders how you'd get on wi'out your pipe, old chap? Talk o' pensions! If us, as be doing all us can, must needs do more, again' a time us may never live to see an'll be too old to enjoy, us had best be killed straight off, as soon's we gets past work. That 'ud be just as well for we, and no odds to them."

"But how about the law, Bess? an' the ten commandments, as you an' me learned in the same class at school?"

Elizabeth laughed. "An' the sixth were one o' the little short uns as you always know'd. What a dunce you was, well I remembers it, over them long uns, Tom! Well, the next best, they should train some o' them big monkeys as Bill's prize-book told on, for field-labourers. They'd do wi' less pay; an' when they was past work, they could be turned out to fend for theirselves i' the woods, an' younger ones got i' their places. Or it wouldn't be no sin to shoot *them*, an' their old skins, maybe, 'ud cheapen shoe-leather."

Her laugh now had a ring of bitterness. Tom Turmits lighted his pipe. "The worst as is," he said, meditatively, "by what I could make out, Government have got plans to stop out-door relief, without for them as puts in to that there National Insurance. You an' me, as it might

be, Bess, if us can't join Sir John's scheme, us 'll end our days in the House, as like as not. There 'on't be no help for it, when we gets past work, if out-door relief be stopped."

"But that 'ud be wickedness, Tom," cried Elizabeth, stopping, dishes in hand, on her way to the back-kitchen. "Do you tell me as they'd visit it upon we, if us downright hadn't money to join? We, wi' seven little uns, an' others coming, for aught as us do know?"

"You should 'a heard the lecturer. Him wouldn't count that no visiting at all; nought but what we'd brought upon ourselves, through marrying."

"Well, that beats all!" said Elizabeth, aghast. "Do they want to stop folks marrying? They'll be bringing charges again' God Almighty next, as made our natures."

"It weren't marrying altogether. What he talked again' were marrying early. There'd be reason in it, if we o' these parts was like them as I 'a heard tell on i' London, children, so to speak, as marries in their teens. But you might search the register-book through, an' you'd scarce find one i' ten, hereabouts, as have married under two an' twenty. I doubts if you'd find a man at all, these score o' years, as have married under twenty-one."

"An' the others be a sight older," returned Elizabeth. "You an' me now, Tom; you was twenty-five, an' I were twenty-four, decent ages as you could desire."

"Our parson, him put in his word there," said Tom, with a puzzled aspect. "Him ups an' tells that there lecturer, 'I be thankful to see,' him says, 'as the young men about here bain't foolish, like they be in some quarters. We gets very few early marriages, on the whole, in this parish,' him says. An' the lecturer taps with his knuckles, an' hollers, 'Hear, hear.'"

"Hearken!" cried Elizabeth, startled.

A noisy rush of feet, with shrieks of laughter, a woman's laughter,

rising above gruffer peals, not too sober, had suddenly broken the stillness of the November night. Thomas Turmits went to the door, his wife following. The moon was sailing amid storm-clouds; in the road, a wild group was dimly visible; a girl struggling in rough horse-play with two or three youths, flying from them, then pausing to laugh and beckon.

"It's Ted I wants, Ted Reynolds. Ted! why won't you ever look at me?"

They rushed on, soon out of sight, though not of sound.

"There be scarce a night," observed Thomas, "as I be leaving my horses, but I meets that there Ada Martin about the roads."

"Shut the door, an' come away from the draught, Tom," cried Elizabeth. "What more did the lecturer say again' early marriages?"

IV.

OUT-DOOR relief to be stopped, excepting for such as had pensions! Elizabeth Turmits awoke, after three hours of sleep, with this idea burning in her brain. Out-door relief stopped! No escape, when infirmity should end work, from the House, save in pensions provided beforehand by the heavily-burdened workers themselves! The darkness made the prospect more terrible. She had hardly realized it before.

Her thoughts went back through long years. She remembered Tom in early youth; how steady and patient he had been; how, when they began to "keep company," his wages at the same time increasing, he had hoped to lay by in anticipation of marriage; but, his father dying and his invalid mother left with three boys too young to support her, had lived with them, and helped them instead. How, when his mother too died, he had paid for her funeral, and then some time longer continued to help his two youngest brothers; so that only a very small nest-

egg had remained, after house-furnishing, for himself and Elizabeth, which had melted, replaced by debt at Jack's birth, in Elizabeth's dangerous illness. How an exceptionally good harvest had revived hope, and Tom had joined the "Foresters," paying punctually, though with difficulty, until again illness came,—not to himself, he would have had the club allowance, but among his children, first one, then another, sickening of scarlet fever. A terrible time had that been! Elizabeth, looking back, wondered how she had lived through it. She herself was the last victim, and Tom was forced to hire a woman to see to her and to the still weakly boys; his club-payments had then lapsed hopelessly, and could never be renewed. At his present age they would be too heavy for renewal. Somehow, later, she and Tom had contrived between them to free themselves from debt, and, schooled by bitter experience, had resolved henceforth to eschew it. They did now just pay their way, but only through constant struggle. The thought of any new tax, however small, weighed like lead upon Elizabeth's heart.

Why was their life so hard, she wondered, the life of these tillers of the soil? A vague protest against injustice somewhere, she could not fix the spot, kindled her meek breast. Shopmen, clerks, colliers, artisans, these can at all times make holiday. For these indeed holidays are organised; but for the agricultural labourer there are no Bank Holidays, no short hours, no early closings. He has no Free Library to sharpen his wits: no quickening intercourse with the keener minds which co-operate in towns. The seasons would not, if he asked (and he would never dream of asking), tarry one hour for his pleasure. The sunshine must immediately be utilized; the frosts brook no delay; the dumb animals, his fellow-workers, have daily, often nightly, needs upon which he must wait punctually, never failing. The years roll by; other men come and go; but he is still at his

post; and his post, in wet or dry, in snow or rain, in burning heat or in freezing cold, is always out of doors. He has no opening for private enterprise; in the only business known to him, want of capital, no less than want of time, is a fatal barrier. As the winters and his patient toils multiply, his back and limbs stiffen and ache; but still, in the vast majority of cases, he plods on, until literally he can plod no more. 'Life still lurks in the brawny frame which endurance and industry have hardened; he can feel still, pain and mild pleasure, although he cannot work.

Is it not hard? Some such question, half articulate, stirred Elizabeth, that, this long day's work by stern necessity over, he should be shovelled out of sight, or left to rot and starve, forgotten by those who have lived on him and by him, who without him could not have lived, far less have thriven and enriched themselves, while he (to use Elizabeth's term) "ruggled on" as best he could, on his weekly wage. They have used him,—all that in him served their purposes, the rest stifled and ignored—to the uttermost. Must he now for the few remaining years reap only punishment, because, in giving his life day after day, and in each day twelve hours, for them, he failed perhaps in thrift for himself? Because he lacked for himself foresight, who never lacked foresight for them, for them and for the fields now bringing forth through his ceaseless cultivation a hundredfold; while he, pining and homesick, decays slowly in his living grave behind the great Workhouse wall.

Ought these things to be? But if they are, one must look them in the face. To this practical conclusion Elizabeth, in the darkness, soon came. Her nature had nothing in common with the Louise Michels of the world. She might question a little, and lament sometimes a little, querulously but always gently. This slight overflow expended, she invariably relapsed into dumbness, and submitted.

She was speedily absorbed in the pressing consideration of how to save her Tom from the fate foreshadowed by the lecturer. A picture rose before her. Tom in old age, worn by labour, tormented by rheumatics, hungry, cold, threadbare, wages ended, applying for help from the parish, for two and sixpence, or two shillings and a loaf, and refused. Refused! Then a struggle, the furniture sold, bit by bit,—Tom would fight hard, she knew. As for herself, she forgot herself altogether; Tom absorbed her mind; Tom, country-bred from the first, ever accustomed to abundance of space, to fresh air, to all the free rural ways, to his rustic neighbours, to his evening pipe; his life like a wild bird's life, labour excepted. Only lately she had seen an old man taken away, in a closed van, to what for him was prison; shut up, subject to iron rules, after a life of honest toil, till death among strangers. It would come to that, if out-door relief were stopped; unless—

She must save him. Somehow she must manage to "put in" to Sir John's scheme. Sixpence a week had been the lowest sum named for men over thirty; a sum, however, which the parson, with that dangerous little knowledge of his, had said would be surely within the power of them all! More, she knew, was simply impossible; but this she would contrive. Only how? The question of the boots recurred, and with it other like questions. Tom's new suit, soon necessary; warm clothes for Dick and Alice; coal to last till the Coal Club dole in January; a gown for herself, she had now no "Sunday gown." And the boys' appetites were growing every day.

"I can't screw nought out o' their food, the poor little lads, wi' their school work and the long walks to an' again. No, nor Tom's; I don't know who 'd have the heart to pinch Tom, so industrious as he be. An' a man be that hearty! An' if him hadn't vittle, he'd take it out maybe in drink.

He'd be bound to take it out somewhere, poor chap. My gown, that must wait. The Almighty knows I'd go to church if I could. He'd never be hard upon me, when it's to save my Tom, as finds us bread by the sweat o' his brow, from the Workhouse. And Him knows as I can't go i' that dirty linsey, and it shrank so, last time, I dursn't wash it. Then I'll eat a bit less,—I'll put a loaf aside for myself and make him last me ten days; I can bear a bit o' hunger, upon times. If it gnaws, I'll think o' my Tom hungering, may be, for a bit o' country-made bread i' the House. An' my tea,—that'll cut the hardest! but I'll soon get used to it; I'll have a ounce less. There'll be twopence at once; an' the savin' i' bread, we'll say'll be twopence halfpenny. And I'll leave off cheese, wi'out just a mite now an' again. An' in a bit, may be, I'll find something more to leave off. An' I'll cut up my warm petticoat for Alice's frock; I can make shift in the other. I can manage, an' him never know. I'll begin to-morrow."

So next morning, to Thomas's surprise, she said: "Tom, I've been a-thinking things over, like. Us'll manage sixpence a week. You give me sixpence less out of your wages, for the food an' that; and then you can put in to the scheme."

"But you've found it hard to make two ends meet as it were, Bess. I've been thinking too; and I've half a mind to give up my 'bacca."

"Give up your 'bacca, as you've told me times an' times, were your main help! that comforting, an' filling up the hole, so to speak, when vittles be short! Never, Tom, while I stands on my two feet. You take out the sixpence, lad, as you gets your money; an' leave the rest to me. An', after work, you'd best go an' tell the parson."

So, greatly to the young parson's satisfaction, Thomas Turmits that same night appeared at the Vicarage, and accepted Sir John's scheme.

V

"I've made up my mind, Mrs. Turmits. I won't consent till we've £100, between us, in the Savings Bank. I shall be very decided; it's only for Ted's good."

Elizabeth Turmits looked puzzled. "I bain't altogether sure, Janey. There be different kinds o' good."

It was Sunday afternoon. Jane Wilson, a young housemaid, at home for a brief holiday, whose parents were near neighbours of Thomas and Elizabeth, had stepped in for half an hour's chat.

"But it must be good to learn habits of temperance and economy," she said sharply, as Elizabeth, rocking the sleeping baby in her arms, looked thoughtfully into the fire. "You ought to have heard the grand lecture, Mrs. Turmits, in my master's iron room. The gentleman specially warned us girls about our responsibility. He said that if only we would set our faces against these early marriages, and influence our young men to——"

"I knows," interposed Elizabeth. "Us had him here. Tom told me all as he said. But them lectures,—there be two sides to it, Janey."

"There are indeed," said Janey, who, unlike her friend, had been born late enough to profit by the Education Act, and had in her time attained the proud pinnacle of the Seventh Standard. "Look at the misery of our poor, with their large families, all owing to want of foresight——"

"Janey, stop a bit," said mild Elizabeth.

"I mean nothing against you, Mrs. Turmits. I know what your drawbacks have been. I think all the world of you as you're well aware."

"I can't tell why, I'm sure," said Elizabeth, colouring and smiling. "You a picture to look at, an' such ways, so tidy, an' have attended cookery classes! An' me always in a muddle! To be sure, you was an only child, Janey, my dear, an' your mother's house be like a new pin. But there,

if I'd been the same twice over, I'd never 'a turned out clever like you. All as is, when you talks o' want o' foresight, I've been thinking to write to you, Janey; only I be such a poor scholar, and the post miscarries too upon times. But I 'a had it on my mind, this long while, to let you know about Ted."

"Ted?" said Janey crimson.

"He be uncommon lonely, you see, Janey. Since his mother died he've had no one to look after him, so to speak; and her petted him, an' made him that comfortable he feels it all the more. Mary Bush her lodgings ain't any too clean; an' she don't trouble to put his supper nice, nor nothing. I 'a seen that much wi' my own eyes. An' her've a grumbling tongue, as young fellows likes to get shut on. There be a deal o' excuse."

"Excuse! Oh, Mrs. Turmits! you promised, long ago, always to tell me about Ted."

"Only you be so hasty, Janey, my dear. Now you try to see his side. There be a ball at the public, regular, every Monday night; an' pigeon-shootings constant, an' after the pigeon-shootings suppers. Look how them young fellows gets tempted! Now they, if you like, gets plenty to put into Sir John's scheme; only some on 'em ought to help their parents more nor they do's, an' all on 'em ought to be saving again' they're married. They thinks a deal too little o' marriage, as it be, Janey, about here; they don't want no incensing to keep from it. If you lived by this roadside at nights, an' heard them lads a rampaging! An' that Ada Martin,—poor wench! her've a bad home, an' I don't want to be hard on her. But there!"

"I know," said Janey, still crimson. "But Ted, Ted would never look at her?"

"Janey, my lass, she be after him. That be all as I can say. There he be, to himself in lodgings; an' lonesome, an' you away, an' the evenings that long, an' the balls at the public as

passes away the time, an' Ada as sticks at nothing."

"Well, Mrs. Turmits, if it comes to that, he must choose between us, Ada Martin or me."

"You be too quick, Janey. Choose between you! I never meant as he could love her. He loves you wi' all his heart, my dear, that I knows, an' Ada be one as no decent young fellow could love. But there be other things besides love, Janey."

"If Ted's one of that sort, he won't suit me; and so I shall tell him," said the girl.

"He be one o' the sort as a good home be the making on. An' there be a many like him. Talk o' saving £100 afore you gets married! Take care as you don't lose more nor you saves! A handy girl like you too, an' got your sewing-machine, as you can always turn a penny by, to help out. Why, look at my Tom, Janey; would you wish to see a steadier husband? My missis, in the last place I had, she were all for me waiting till I were thirty; it 'ud save me a sight of trouble, she said. An' I were half ready to hearken to her; but I went home, an' there were Tom, as had started his brothers to service, an' were lonesome like, same as your Ted; an' one an' another, when he were leaving his work, saying, 'Come along Tom! what'll yer 'ave?' an' a deal more, that young fellows gets led away by. So when he told me as he were that lonesome, I thinks, 'Never mind me, trouble or no trouble.' An' we was married that summer."

"And here you are, after all you've gone through, advising me to follow you?" said Janey.

"I'd do it over again," said Elizabeth, still rocking the baby. "Yes, if the time was gone back, and I foresee'd all as have happened, I'd do it, just the same, again. An' if I could make bold I'd tell that lecturer, 'For early marriages, sir, one man's meat be another man's poison. You 'a got hold o' the wrong end o' the stick, sir.' Janey, this be how I looks at it. Men

be different fro' we. When we loves 'em, it be better to die for 'em than leave 'em alone to go wrong."

Janey sat long silent, looking down at her hands which were encased in neat kid gloves. "Mrs. Turmits," she cried suddenly, "you're half an angel. But I'm not an angel one bit. There's Ted in the road! I'll go out to him and give him a piece of my mind."

VI.

"SHE seems half-starved," said the parish doctor; "that is the secret. She has been living too low for a long time. You look well enough, my man, both you and your lads," he added after a thoughtful survey. "Was her appetite fanciful, or what?"

"I reckon it be all along o' that there Thrift," said Thomas doggedly. "Her've been stinting herself, I'll lay, to save the sixpence as we puts in to Sir John's scheme."

"It's been sixpence wise and pounds foolish, then," said the doctor. "You'll spend ten times as much as you've laid by, before, if ever, you get up her strength again. Shall I give her an order for the Workhouse Infirmary? She mustn't be moved yet, though."

"Her shall never be moved from here, not while I 'a hands to work," said Thomas Turmits. "It worn't no doings o' mine, sir; I know'd nought on it. Though I might 'a know'd," he added to himself; "aye, I might 'a know'd."

Upstairs Elizabeth lay pale and prostrate in the calm of the sweet spring evening. A thrush was singing in the lilac boughs near her window. The sunset glow was transfiguring the green of Mr. Acres's home-meadow, wherein her faint eyes rested upon two caid lambs, sporting merrily although their mother had died at their birth. Upon a box in the corner of the room, beneath a clean white towel, a tiny baby slept its first and last sleep.

"Janey!" said Elizabeth.

Was it Elizabeth, or a voice from a

far world? She seemed not at all surprised by Jane Wilson's sudden entrance; and yet they had not met for six months, and she had not been told that the girl had left her situation. The woman in attendance raised a warning hand; Janey swallowed her sobs, stealing stealthily towards the bed.

"I wants Mrs. Robbins to go down an' get Tom's supper. There be a cold pie i' the cupboard. I made it for a bit o' surprise to him. I wants Mrs. Robbins to put him comfortable."

"So I will," said Mrs. Robbins. "You try an' have a nice little nap, Mrs. Turmits, my dear."

But Elizabeth's fading eyes were still fixed on the pretty caid lambs. "Be her gone? It be past his supper-time. Janey, you sit down along o' me. I be tired, my lass, I be tired out; I couldn't get up an' see to him, not if it was ever so. I be hop-tying, an' my limbs be that stiff! The wind be cold, an' I cut up my petticoat for Alice. Her wanted a warm frock, so her did, my pretty dear! The little 'un as is coming, her'll never beat Alice; she be the prettiest child ever I had. I'll feel better i' the morning, Janey; the night's rest 'll ease me: but I 'a somewhat on my mind to say to you, if only I could think on."

"You sleep a bit first, Mrs. Turmits," said Janey, clasping the passive hand.

Elizabeth did not hear. "I've thought a deal about it, Janey; I 'a planned always. Tom, he'd break his heart,—that there sixpence, it must be paid, Janey!" She came suddenly to herself. "Have I been talking rubbish? I loses my head like, 'an the words slips out so funny! But I've got it all right now I've remembered." She turned her head, and gazed at the girl. "The parson said, 'God helps them as helps themselves.' An' it be true, I knows; but it struck cold like. An' then, when I couldn't go to church—the Almighty, Him know'd about my linsey—I got looking through the prayer-book, an' I found some other

words: 'Sure I am,'—I shall think on 'em just now. One an' another saying, 'Tom, what'll ye 'ave?'—an' him so lonesome! He'll have took to drinking, may be, afore I be thirty, missis.—Janey, I 'a thought!—'Sure I am as [the Lord'll avenge the poor, an' maintain the cause o' the helpless.' It were that showed me as the Lord be on our side. Him 'a got a hand for the helpless too, Janey."

"Mrs. Turmits! dear Mrs. Turmits," murmured Janey, her tears falling fast.

The tired eyes closed. "I be clean spent, Janey. Them hops, they be bound to be tied, an' our master, us mustn't cross him.—But I'll be rested i' the morning, my girl.—Work, work, work, all the years through! an' the House at last. No, the Lord'll save him. 'Sure I am' as the Lord'll help the helpless. Janey, I was used to have wrong thoughts, upon times, but I knows better now. When us gets to the Lord, us'll see why this world had to be so hard, like.—You tell Tom as I'll be up i' good time. I'll see to him an' the little uns, so soon as it be light i' the morning.—I wants nought but a good night's rest. Tom, my lad."

Early on the following day, Thomas Turmits was ushered into the parson's study. "If you please, sir," said he, "I be come to draw out my money."

"My good friend, I was just about to visit you. I have heard of your sad trouble. But,—your money?"

"The money as I 'a paid into that there scheme," said Thomas doggedly. "Us be bound to have a parish coffin. up L—relieving Officer, him won't give enough 'yder, so long's I've anything would not be
of iced coffe

aware of a VII.

the white clo e evening of Elizabeth's light. He lo At home, in the old standing there parson was sitting with where to sit d peaceful sunset lights fuller than u nce more; the kitchen the throng of children

having, as it were, melted away. The former baby was in charge of Mrs. Robbins; Alice already at an orphanage, to which Jane Wilson's late mistress subscribed; two of the boys had been taken, for the present, by Jane and her mother; only the two eldest and their pet, little Dick, remained. Dick was now upstairs in bed; Bill and Jack sat like two automations upon the settle, staring at the parson.

The young parson's celibate heart was touched. He sincerely desired to comfort the bereaved husband, but nothing that he said seemed to penetrate the stolid reserve of this yokel. He answered only when absolutely necessary, and in monosyllables; he shed no tear; no change of expression lightened the heavy countenance. Was it reserve, or apathy? thought the parson. After all, as the lecturer on Thrift had remarked, these people were little more than animals; good, hard-working animals, no doubt, but as for any higher emotion,—well! all the better for them! especially better for this widower with his motherless children. The back is mercifully suited to the burden among these agricultural poor, the parson thought.

Suddenly wheels, which for some minutes he had heard approaching, stopped in the road before the door. Thomas Turmits did not look round, but the elder boy jumped down from the settle and ran out. The parson espied the black hood of the carrier's van.

"Daddy," said Bill, re-entering with a little parcel which he laid on the round table beside Thomas. The wheels had resumed their rumble, the hood passed the window and vanished.

"What be this?" said Thomas.

The rosy boy looked sheepishly at the parson, shuffled, sniffed, and sighed.

"Daddy," he repeated in a half whisper, edging nearer to his father; "it be the best half pound o' bacca as the carrier 'ooman could get for the shilling."

"There be some mistake," said Thomas, giving the parcel a slight shove.

"Tell your father the truth, my boy. Speak out," said the parson.

Thus urged, Bill mustered his courage. "It were mammy as put the shilling in the cracked teapot, done up i' paper, last Saturday was a week, daddy; an' her told me as, if her lived, it 'ud be her churching fee; but if her died, I were to say nothing afore the funeral, but watch for the carrier 'ooman, an' send for half a pound o' good bacca, an' give it to you for a bit o' comfort like. 'Cause mammy said——"

"Go on, my little fellow," repeated the parson.

"Mammy said, daddy," went on Bill, with a shaking voice, "as you'd want comfort badder after the funeral. 'Cause you'd be a bit excited, afore; but after, it 'ud seem all so lonesome like."

Then the little lad gave vent to his tears. But Thomas Turmits, rising hastily, his chair clattering overturned on the bricks, snatched as hastily at his hat, and disappeared through the back-kitchen door to a barn in which he could neither be seen nor, as he doubtless imagined, heard. The parson, however, passing out five minutes later, did hear him, for he was weeping bitterly.

One month more, and the June sun was shining upon a bright young bride. And as she passed, on her husband's arm, that long green mound which enshrined rest beyond the reach of wedding-bells, she stopped and looked down. "Mrs. Turmits would be glad," she said softly.

The stalwart young bridegroom looked also, pressing the arm which held her hand, to his side. "Oh, if it had been you, Janey, if it had been you!" he said, half shuddering, under his breath.

"Should you have cared, Ted?"

"Cared? Ah, lass! You don't

know yet, you don't know half what you are to me."

The words were sweet to Janey. But as she listened, her eyes filled, for other words were echoing in her mind. "*When we loves 'em, it be better to die for 'em than leave 'em alone to go wrong.*"

Elizabeth Turmits had died.

VIII

"It is a problem, after all," said the parson.

"What is a problem?" inquired the keen-faced lecturer.

"This question of Thrift. My opinions are unsettled. When the three kinds clash, what is to be done?"

"The three kinds?" repeated the lecturer.

"Last November I saw only one. After further research, I see three most distinctly."

"Name them."

"First, your own kind. Shall we call it, to be brief, the earthly kind?"

"Quite so. It could hardly be otherwise, unless the art of ballooning should some day enable us to extend our operations," observed the lecturer.

"Secondly, Elizabeth Turmits's kind. Suppose we call that, for the sake of argument, the heavenly kind?"

"Well——!" said the lecturer hesitating: "for the sake of antithesis, rather, and from courtesy to your office, suppose we do."

"Thirdly"—the parson meditated.

"Thirdly?" re-echoed the lecturer with curiosity.

"The third kind I can't define. It ought to unite the others. But *it's* an undeveloped science," said the son, rising. "I know only *that* But I've we have mastered it, we numbered." found a more excellent *gazed* at the squander such material as *'God helps*

And he pointed to *th's*. An' it be where Elizabeth Turmit's *ruck* cold like. prime, her baby on her *i't* go to church know'd about ag through the nd some other

MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

AUGUST, 1892.

DON ORSINO.¹

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD.

CHAPTER XVII.

ORSINO necessarily led a monotonous life, though his occupation was an absorbing one. Very early in the morning he was with Contini where the building was going on. He then passed the hot hours of the day in the office, which, as before, had been established in one of the unfinished houses. Towards evening he went down into the city to his home, refreshed himself after his long day's work, and then walked or drove until half-past eight, when he went to dinner in the garden of a great restaurant in the Corso. Here he met a few acquaintances who, like himself, had reasons for staying in town after their families had left. He always sat at the same small table, at which there was barely room for two persons, for he preferred to be alone, and he rarely asked a passing friend to sit down with him.

On a certain hot evening in the beginning of August he had just taken his seat, and was trying to make up his mind whether he were hungry enough to eat anything or whether it would not be less trouble to drink a glass of iced coffee and go away, when he was aware of a lank shadow cast across the white cloth by the glaring electric light. He looked up and saw Spicca standing there, apparently uncertain where to sit down, for the place was fuller than usual. He liked the

melancholy old man and spoke to him, offering a share of his table.

Spicca hesitated a moment and then accepted the invitation. He deposited his hat upon a chair beside him and leaned back, evidently exhausted either in mind or body, if not in both.

"I am very much obliged to you, my dear Orsino," he said. "There is an abominable crowd here, which means an unusual number of people to avoid; just as many as I know, in fact, excepting yourself."

"I am glad you do not wish to avoid me, too," observed Orsino, by way of saying something.

"You are a less evil, so I choose you in preference to the greater," Spicca answered. But there was a not unkindly look in his sunken eyes as he spoke.

He tipped the great flask of Chianti that hung in its swinging plated cradle in the middle of the table, and filled two glasses.

"Since all that is good has been abolished, let us drink to the least of evils," he said, "in other words, to each other."

"To the absence of friends," answered Orsino, touching the wine with his lips.

Spicca emptied his glass slowly and then looked at him.

"I like that toast," he said. "To the absence of friends. I dare say you have heard of Adam and Eve in the

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garden of Eden. Do they still teach the dear old tale in these modern schools? No. But you have heard it,—very well. You will remember that if they had not allowed the serpent to scrape acquaintance with them, on pretence of a friendly interest in their intellectual development, Adam and Eve would still be inventing names for the angelic little wild beasts who were too well-behaved to eat them. They would still be in Paradise. Moreover Orsino Saracinesca and John Nepomucene Spicca would not be in daily danger of poisoning in this vile cook-shop. Summary ejection from Eden was the first consequence of friendship, and its results are similar to this day. What nauseous mess are we to swallow to-night? Have you looked at the card?"

Orsino laughed a little. He foresaw that Spicca would not be dull company on this particular evening. Something unusually disagreeable had probably happened to him during the day. After long and melancholy hesitation he ordered something which he believed he could eat, and Orsino followed his example.

"Are all your people out of town?" Spicca asked, after a pause.

"Yes. I am alone."

"And what in the world is the attraction here? Why do you stay? I do not wish to be indiscreet, and I was never afflicted with curiosity. But cases of mental alienation grow more common every day, and as an old friend of your father's I cannot overlook symptoms of madness in you. A really sane person avoids Rome in August."

"It strikes me that I might say the same to you," answered Orsino. "I am kept here by business. You have not even that excuse."

"How do you know?" asked Spicca sharply. "Business has two main elements, credit and debit. The one means the absence of the other. I leave it to your lively intelligence to decide which of the two means Rome

in August, and which means Trouville or St. Moritz."

"I had not thought of it in that light."

"No? I dare say not. I constantly think of it."

"There are other places nearer than St. Moritz," suggested Orsino. "Why not go to Sorrento?"

"There was such a place once, but my friends have found it out. Nevertheless, I might go there. It is better to suffer friendship in the spirit than fever in the body. But I have a reason for staying here just at present, a very good one."

"Without indiscretion——?"

"No, certainly not without considerable indiscretion. Take some more wine. When intoxication is bliss, it is folly to be sober, as the proverb says. I cannot get tipsy, but you may, and that will be almost as amusing. The main object of drinking wine is that one person should make confidences for the other to laugh at; the one enjoys it quite as much as the other."

"I would rather be the other," said Orsino, with a laugh.

"In all cases in life it is better to be the other person," observed Spicca thoughtfully, though the remark lacked precision.

"You mean the patient and not the agent. I suppose?"

"No, I mean the spectator. The spectator is a well-fed, indifferent personage who laughs at the play and goes home to supper—perdition upon him and his kind! He is the abomination of desolation in a front stall, looking on while better men cut one another's throats. He is a fat man with a pink complexion and small eyes, and when he has watched other people's troubles long enough, he retires to his comfortable vault in the family chapel in the Campo Varano, which is decorated with coloured tiles, embellished with a modern altar-piece, and adorned with a bust of himself by a good sculptor. Even in death he is still the spectator, grinning through

the window of his sanctuary at the rows of nameless graves outside. He is happy and self-satisfied still, even in marble. It is worth living to be such a man."

"It is not an exciting life," remarked Orsino.

"No. That is the beauty of it. Look at me. I have never succeeded in imitating that well-to-do, thoroughly worthy villain. I began too late. Take warning, Orsino. You are young; grow fat and look on; then you will die happy. All the philosophy of life is there. Farinaceous food, money, and a wife. That is the recipe. Since you have money you can purchase the gruel and the affections. Waste no time in making the investment."

"I never heard you advocate marriage before. You seem to have changed your mind of late."

"Not in the least. I distinguish between being married and taking a wife, that is all."

"Rather a fine distinction."

"The only difference between a prisoner and his gaoler is that they are on opposite sides of the same wall. Take some more wine. We will drink to the man on the outside."

"May you never be inside," said Orsino.

Spicca emptied his glass and looked at him as he set it down again. "May you never know what it is to have been inside," he said.

"You speak as through you had some experience."

"Yes, I have, through an acquaintance of mine."

"That is the most agreeable way of gaining experience."

"Yes," answered Spicca with a ghastly smile. "Perhaps I may tell you the story some day. You may profit by it. It ended rather dramatically,—so far as it can be said to have ended at all. But we will not speak of it just now. Here is another dish of poison! Do you call that thing a fish, Checco? Ah, yes, I perceive that you are right; the fact is appar-

ent at a great distance. Take it away. We are all mortal, Checco, but we do not like to be reminded of it so very forcibly. Give me a tomato and some vinegar."

"And the birds, Signore? Do you not want them any more?"

"The birds—yes, I had forgotten. And another flask of wine, Checco."

"It is not empty yet, Signore," observed the waiter, lifting the rush-covered bottle and shaking it a little.

Spicca silently poured out two glasses and handed him the empty flask. He seemed to be very thirsty. Presently he got his birds. They proved eatable, for quails are to be had all through the summer in Italy, and he began to eat in silence. Orsino watched him with some curiosity, wondering whether the quantity of wine he drank would not ultimately produce some effect. As yet, however, none was visible; his cadaverous face was as pale and quiet as ever, and his sunken eyes had their usual expression.

"And how does your business go on, Orsino?" he asked, after a long silence.

Orsino answered him willingly enough, and gave him some account of his doings. He grew somewhat enthusiastic as he compared his present busy life with his former idleness.

"I like the way you did it, in spite of everybody's advice," said Spicca, kindly. "A man who can jump through the paper ring of Roman prejudice without stumbling must be nimble and have good legs. So nobody gave you a word of encouragement?"

"Only one person, at first. I think you know her—Madame d'Aranjuez. I used to see her often just at that time."

"Madame d'Aranjuez?" Spicca looked up sharply, pausing with his glass in his hand.

"You know her?"

"Very well indeed," answered the old man, before he drank. "Tell me, Orsino," he continued, when he had

finished the draught, "are you in love with that lady?"

Orsino was surprised by the directness of the question, but he did not show it. "Not in the least," he answered coolly.

"Then why did you act as though you were?" asked Spicca, looking him through and through.

"Do you mean to say that you were watching me all winter?" inquired Orsino, bending his black eyebrows raised angrily.

"Circumstances made it inevitable that I should know of your visits. There was a time when you saw her every day."

"I do not know what the circumstances, as you call them, were," answered Orsino. "But I do not like to be watched, even by my father's old friends."

"Keep your temper, Orsino," said Spicca quietly. "Quarrelling is always ridiculous unless somebody is killed, and then it is inconvenient. If you understood the nature of my acquaintance with Maria Consuelo,—with Madame d'Aranjuez—you would see that, while not meaning to spy upon you in the least, I could not be ignorant of your movements."

"Your acquaintance must be a very close one," observed Orsino, far from pacified.

"So close that it has justified me in doing very odd things on her account. You will not accuse me of taking a needless and officious interest in the affairs of others, I think. My own are quite enough for me. It chances that they are intimately connected with the doings of Madame d'Aranjuez, and have been so for a number of years. The fact that I do not desire the connection to be known does not make it easier for me to act, when I am obliged to act at all. I did not ask an idle question when I asked you if you loved her."

"I confess that I do not at all understand the situation," said Orsino.

"No. It is not easy to understand unless I give you the key to it. And

yet you know more already than any one in Rome. I shall be obliged if you will not repeat what you know."

"You may trust me," answered Orsino, who saw from Spicca's manner that the matter was very serious.

"Thank you. I see that you are cured of the idea that I have been frivolously spying upon you for my own amusement."

Orsino was silent. He thought of what had happened after he had taken leave of Maria Consuelo. The mysterious maid who called herself Maria Consuelo's nurse, or keeper, had perhaps spoken the truth. It was possible that Spicca was one of the guardians responsible to an unknown person for the insane lady's safety, and that he was consequently daily informed by the maid of the coming and going of visitors, and of other minor events. On the other hand it seemed odd that Maria Consuelo should be at liberty to go whithersoever she pleased. She could not reasonably be supposed to have a guardian in every city of Europe. The more he thought of this improbability the less he understood the truth.

"I suppose I cannot hope that you will tell me more," he said.

"I do not see why I should," answered Spicca, drinking again. "I asked you an indiscreet question and I have given you an explanation which you are kind enough to accept. Let us say no more about it. It is better to avoid unpleasant subjects."

"I should not call Madame d'Aranjuez an unpleasant subject," observed Orsino.

"Then why did you suddenly cease to visit her?" asked Spicca.

"For the best of all reasons. Because she repeatedly refused to see me." He was less inclined to take offence now than five minutes earlier. "I see that your information was not complete."

"No. I was not aware of that. She must have had a good reason for not seeing you."

"Possibly."

"But you cannot guess what the reason was?"

"Yes, and no. It depends upon her character, which I do not pretend to understand."

"I understand it well enough. I can guess at the fact. You made love to her, and one fine day, when she saw that you were losing your head, she quietly told her servant to say that she was not at home when you called. Is that it?"

"Possibly. You say you know her well; then you know whether she would act in that way or not."

"I ought to know. I think she would. She is not like other women; she has not the same blood."

"Who is she?" asked Orsino, with a sudden hope that he might learn the truth.

"A woman, rather better than the rest; a widow, too, the widow of a man who never was her husband, thank God!"

Spicca slowly refilled and emptied his goblet for the tenth time. "The rest is a secret," he added, when he had finished drinking.

The dark sunken eyes gazed into Orsino's with an expression so strange and full of a sort of inexplicable horror, as to make the young man think that the deep potations were beginning to produce an effect upon the strong old head. Spicca sat quite still for several minutes after he had spoken, and then leaned back in his cane chair with a deep sigh. Orsino sighed too, in a sort of unconscious sympathy, for even allowing for Spicca's natural melancholy the secret was evidently an unpleasant one. Orsino tried to turn the conversation, not, however, without a hope of bringing it back unawares to the question which interested him. "And so you really mean to stay here all the summer," he remarked, lighting a cigarette and looking at the people seated at a table behind Spicca.

Spicca did not answer at first, and when he did his reply had nothing to do with Orsino's interrogatory observation. "We never get rid of the

things we have done in our lives," he said dreamily. "When a man sows seed in a ploughed field some of the grains are picked out by birds, and some never sprout. We are much more perfectly organised than the earth. The actions we sow in our souls all take root, inevitably and fatally; and they all grow to maturity sooner or later."

Orsino stared at him for a moment. "You are in a philosophising mood this evening," he said.

"We are only logic's pawns," continued Spicca, without heeding the remark. "Or, if you like it better, we are the devil's chessmen in his match against God. We are made to move each in our own way. The one by short irregular steps in every direction, the other in long straight lines between starting point and goal; the one stands still, like the king-piece, and never moves unless he is driven to it, the other jumps unevenly like the knight. It makes no difference. We take a certain number of other pieces, and then we are taken ourselves, always by the adversary, and tossed aside out of the game. But then, it is easy to carry out the simile, because the game itself was founded on the facts of life, by the people who invented it."

"No doubt," said Orsino, who was not very much interested.

"Yes. You have only to give the pieces the names of men and women you know, and to call the pawns society, you will see how very like real life chess can be. The king and queen on each side are a married couple. Of course, the object of each queen is to get the other king, and all her friends help her—knights, bishops, rooks and her set of society pawns. Very like real life, is it not? Wait till you are married."

Spicca smiled grimly and took more wine.

"There at least you have no personal experience," objected Orsino.

But Spicca only smiled again, and vouchsafed no answer.

"Is Madame d'Aranjuez coming back next winter?" asked the young man.

"Madame d'Aranjuez will probably come back, since she is free to consult her own tastes," answered Spicca gravely.

"I hope she may be out of danger by that time," said Orsino quietly. He had resolved upon a bolder attack than he had hitherto made.

"What danger is she in now?" asked Spicca calmly.

"Surely, you must know."

"I do not understand you. Please speak plainly if you are in earnest."

"Before she went away I called once more. When I was coming away her maid met me in the corridor of the hotel and told me that Madame d'Aranjuez was not quite sane, and that she, the maid, was in reality her keeper, or nurse, or whatever you please to call her."

Spicca laughed harshly. No one could remember to have heard him laugh many times. "Oh, she said that, did she?" He seemed very much amused. "Yes," he added presently, "I think Madame d'Aranjuez will be quite out of danger before Christmas."

Orsino was more puzzled than ever. He was almost sure that Spicca did not look upon the maid's assertion as serious, and in that case, if his interest in Maria Consuelo was friendly, it was incredible that he should seem amused at what was at least a very dangerous piece of spite on the part of a trusted servant. "Then is there no truth in that woman's statement?" he asked.

"Madame d'Aranjuez seemed perfectly sane when I last saw her," answered Spicca indifferently.

"Then what possible interest had the maid in inventing the lie?"

"Ah, what interest? That is quite another matter, as you say. It may not have been her own interest."

"You think that Madame d'Aranjuez had instructed her?"

"Not necessarily. Some one else may have suggested the idea, subject to the lady's own consent."

"And she would have consented? I do not believe that."

"My dear Orsino, the world is full of such apparently improbable things that it is always rash to disbelieve anything on the first hearing. It is really much less trouble to accept all that one is told without question."

"Of course, if you tell me positively that she wishes to be thought mad——"

"I never say anything positively, especially about a woman, and least of all about the lady in question, who is undoubtedly eccentric."

Instead of being annoyed, Orsino felt his curiosity growing, and made a rash vow to find out the truth at any price. It was inconceivable, he thought, that Spicca should still have perfect control of his faculties, considering the extent of his potations. The second flask was growing light, and Orsino himself had not taken more than two or three glasses. Now a Chianti flask never holds less than two quarts. Moreover Spicca was generally a very moderate man. He would assuredly not resist the confusing effects of the wine much longer, and he would probably become confidential.

But Orsino had mistaken his man. Spicca's nerves, overwrought by some unknown disturbance in his affairs, were in that state in which far stronger stimulants than Tuscan wine have little or no effect upon the brain. Orsino looked at him and wondered, as many had wondered already, what sort of life the man had led, outside and beyond the social existence which every one could see. Few men had been dreaded like the famous duellist, who had played with the best swordsmen in Europe as a cat plays with a mouse. And yet he had been respected, as well as feared. There had been that sort of fatality in his quarrels which had saved him from the imputation of having sought them. He had never been a gambler, as reputed duellists often are. He had never refused to stand second for

another man out of personal dislike or prejudice. No one had ever asked his help in vain, high or low, rich or poor, in a reasonably good cause. His acts of kindness came to light accidentally after many years. Yet most people fancied that he hated mankind, with that sort of generous detestation which never stoops to take a mean advantage. In his duels he had always shown the utmost consideration for his adversary, and the utmost indifference to his own interest when conditions had to be made. Above all, he had never killed a man by accident. That is a crime which society does not forgive. But he had not failed, either, when he had meant to kill. His speech was often bitter, but never spiteful, and, having nothing to fear, he was a very truthful man. He was also reticent, however, and no one could boast of knowing the story which every one agreed in saying had so deeply influenced his life. He had often been absent from Rome for long periods, and had been heard of as residing in more than one European capital. He had always been supposed to be rich, but during the last three years it had become clear to his friends that he was poor. That was all, roughly speaking, which was known of John Nepomucene, Count Spicca, by the society in which he had spent more than half his life.

Orsino, watching the pale and melancholy face, compared himself with his companion, and wondered whether any imaginable series of events could turn him into such a man at the same age. Yet he admired Spicca, besides respecting him. Boy-like, he envied the great duellist his reputation, his unerring skill, his unfaltering nerve; he even envied him the fear he inspired in those whom he did not like. He thought less highly of his sayings now, perhaps, than when he had first been old enough to understand them. The youthful affectation of cynicism had agreed well with the old man's genuine bitterness, but the pride of growing manhood was inclined

to put away childish things and had not yet suffered so as to understand real suffering. Six months had wrought a change in Orsino, and so far the change was for the better. He had been fortunate in finding success at the first attempt, and his passing passion for Maria Consuelo had left little trace beyond a certain wondering regret that it had not been greater and beyond the recollection of her sad face at their parting and of the sobs he had overheard. Though he could only give those tears one meaning, he realised less and less as the months passed that they had been shed for him.

That Maria Consuelo should often be in his thoughts was no proof that he still loved her in the smallest degree. There had been enough odd circumstances about their acquaintance to rouse any ordinary man's interest, and just at present Spicca's strange hints and half confidences had excited an almost unbearable curiosity in his hearer. But Spicca did not seem inclined to satisfy it any further.

One or two points, at least, were made clear. Maria Consuelo was not insane, as the maid had pretended. Her marriage with the deceased Aranjuez had been a marriage only in name, if it had even amounted to that. Finally, it was evident that she stood in some very near relation to Spicca, and that neither she nor he wished the fact to be known. To all appearance they had carefully avoided meeting during the preceding winter, and no one in society was aware that they were even acquainted. Orsino recalled more than one occasion when each had been mentioned in the presence of the other. He had a good memory, and he remembered that a scarcely perceptible change had taken place in the manner or conversation of the one who heard the other's name. It even seemed to him that at such moments Maria Consuelo had shown an infinitesimal resentment, whereas Spicca had faintly exhibited something more like impatience. If this were true, it

argued that Spicca was more friendly to Maria Consuelo than she was to him. Yet on this particular evening Spicca had spoken somewhat bitterly of her; but then, Spicca was always bitter. His last remark was to the effect that she was eccentric. After a long silence, during which Orsino hoped that his friend would say something more, he took up the point. "I wish I knew what you meant by eccentric," he said. "I had the advantage of seeing Madame d'Aranjuez frequently, and I did not notice any eccentricity about her."

"Ah, perhaps you are not observant. Or perhaps, as you hint, we do not mean the same thing."

"That is why I would like to hear your definition," observed Orsino.

"The world is mad on the subject of definitions," answered Spicca. "It is more blessed to define than to be defined. It is a pleasant thing to say to one's enemy, 'Sir, you are a scoundrel.' But when your enemy says the same thing to you, you kill him without hesitation or regret, which proves, I suppose, that you are not pleased with his definition of you. You see definition, after all, is a matter of taste. So, as our tastes might not agree, I would rather not define anything this evening. I believe I have finished that flask. Let us take our coffee. We can define that beforehand, for we know by daily experience how diabolically bad it is."

Orsino saw that Spicca meant to lead the conversation away in another direction. "May I ask you one serious question?" he inquired, leaning forward.

"With a little ingenuity you may even ask me a dozen, all equally serious, my dear Orsino. But I cannot promise to answer all or any particular one. I am not omniscient, you know."

"My question is this. I have no sort of right to ask it. I know that. Are you nearly related to Madame d'Aranjuez?"

Spicca looked curiously at him. "Would the information be of any

use to you?" he asked. "Should I be doing you a service in telling you that we are, or are not related?"

"Frankly, no," answered Orsino, meeting the steady glance without wavering.

"Then I do not see any reason whatever for telling you the truth," returned Spicca quietly. "But I will give you a piece of general information. If harm comes to that lady through any man whomsoever, I will certainly kill him, even if I have to be carried upon the ground."

There was no mistaking the tone in which the threat was uttered. Spicca meant what he said, though not one syllable was spoken louder than another. In his mouth the words had a terrific force, and told Orsino more of the man's true nature than he had learnt in years. Orsino was not easily impressed, and was certainly not timid, morally or physically; moreover he was in the prime of youth and not less skilful than other men in the use of weapons. But he felt at that moment that he would infinitely rather attack a regiment of artillery single-handed than be called upon to measure swords with the cadaverous old invalid who sat on the other side of the table. "It is not in my power to do any harm to Madame d'Aranjuez," he answered, proudly enough; "and you ought to know that if it were, it could not possibly be in my intention. Therefore your threat is not intended for me."

"Very good, Orsino. Your father would have answered like that, and you mean what you say. If I were young I think that you and I should be friends. Fortunately for you there is a matter of forty years' difference between our ages, so that you escape the infliction of such a nuisance as my friendship. You must find it bad enough to have to put up with my company."

"Do not talk like that," answered Orsino. "The world is not all vinegar."

"Well, well—you will find out what the world is in time. And perhaps

you will find out many other things which you want to know. I must be going, for I have letters to write. Checco! my bill."

Five minutes later they parted.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ALTHOUGH Orsino's character was developing quickly in the new circumstances which he had created for himself, he was not of an age to be continually on his guard against passing impressions; still less could it be expected that he should be hardened against them by experience, as many men are by nature. His conversation with Spicca, and Spicca's own behaviour while it lasted, produced a decided effect upon the current of his thoughts, and he was surprised to find himself thinking more often and more seriously of Maria Consuelo than during the months which had succeeded her departure from Rome. Spicca's words had acted indirectly upon his mind. Much that the old man had said was calculated to rouse Orsino's curiosity, but Orsino was not naturally curious, and though he felt that it would be very interesting to know Maria Consuelo's story, the chief result of the Count's half confidential utterances was to recall the lady herself very vividly to his recollection.

At first his memory merely brought back the endless details of his acquaintance with her, which had formed the central feature of the first season he had spent without interruption in Rome and in society. He was surprised at the extreme precision of the pictures evoked, and took pleasure in calling them up when he was alone and unoccupied. The events themselves had not, perhaps, been all agreeable, yet there was not one which it did not give him some pleasant sensation to remember. There was a little sadness in some of them, and more than once the sadness was mingled with something of humiliation. Yet even this last was bearable. Though he did not realise it, he was quite un-

able to think of Maria Consuelo without feeling some passing touch of happiness at the thought, for happiness can live with sadness when it is the greater of the two. He had no desire to analyse these sensations. Indeed the idea did not enter his mind that they were worth analysing. His intelligence was better employed with his work, and his reflections concerning Maria Consuelo chiefly occupied his hours of rest.

The days passed quickly at first, and then as September came they seemed longer instead of shorter. He was beginning to wish that the winter would come, that he might again see the woman of whom he was continually thinking. More than once he thought of writing to her, for he had the address which the maid had given him, an address in Paris which said nothing, a mere number with the name of a street. He wondered whether she would answer him, and when he had reached the self-satisfying conviction that she would, he at last wrote a letter, such as any person might write to another. He told her of the weather, of the dulness of Rome, of his hope that she would return early in the season, and of his own daily occupations. It was a simply expressed, natural, and far from emotional epistle, not at all like that of a man in the least degree in love with his correspondent, but Orsino felt an odd sensation of pleasure in writing it, and was surprised by a little thrill of happiness as he posted it with his own hand.

He did not forget the letter when he had sent it either, as one forgets the uninteresting letters one is obliged to write out of civility. He hoped for an answer. Even if she were in Paris Maria Consuelo might not, and probably would not, reply by return of post. And it was not probable that she would be in town at the beginning of September. Orsino calculated the time necessary to forward the letter from Paris to the most distant part of frequented Europe, allowed her three days

for answering and three days more for her letter to reach him. The interval elapsed, but nothing came. Then he was irritated, and at last he became anxious. Either something had happened to Maria Consuelo, or he had somehow unconsciously offended her by what he had written. He had no copy of the letter and could not recall a single phrase which could have displeased her, but he feared lest something might have crept into it which she might misinterpret. But this idea was too absurd to be tenable for long, and the conviction grew upon him that she must be ill or in some great trouble. He was amazed at his own anxiety.

Three weeks had gone by since he had written, and yet no word of reply had reached him. Then he sought out Spicca and asked him boldly whether anything had happened to Maria Consuelo, explaining that he had written to her and had got no answer. Spicca looked at him curiously for a moment. "Nothing has happened to her, as far as I am aware," he said, almost immediately. "I saw her this morning."

"This morning!" Orsino was surprised almost out of words.

"Yes. She is here, looking for an apartment in which to spend the winter."

"Where is she?"

Spicca named the hotel, adding that Orsino would probably find her at home during the hot hours of the afternoon.

"Has she been here long?" asked the young man.

"Three days."

"I will go and see her at once. I may be useful to her in finding an apartment."

"That would be very kind of you," observed Spicca, glancing at him rather thoughtfully.

On the following afternoon Orsino presented himself at the hotel and asked for Madame d'Aranjuez. She received him in a room not very different from the one which she had

made her sitting-room during the winter. As always, one or two new books and the mysterious silver paper-cutter were the only objects of her own which were visible. Orsino hardly noticed the fact, however, for she was already in the room when he entered, and his eyes met hers at once.

He fancied that she looked less strong than formerly, but the heat was great and might easily account for her pallor. Her eyes were deeper, and their tawny colour seemed darker. Her hand was cold.

She smiled faintly as she met Orsino, but said nothing and sat down at a distance from the windows.

"I only heard last night that you were in Rome," he said.

"And you came at once to see me. Thanks. How did you find it out?"

"Spicca told me. I had asked him for news of you."

"Why him?" inquired Maria Consuelo with some curiosity.

"Because I fancied he might know," answered Orsino, passing lightly over the question. He did not wish even Maria Consuelo to guess that Spicca had spoken of her to him. "The reason why I was anxious about you was that I had written you a letter. I wrote some weeks ago to your address in Paris and got no answer."

"You wrote?" Maria Consuelo seemed surprised. "I have not been in Paris. Who gave you the address? What was it?"

Orsino named the street and the number.

"I once lived there a short time, two years ago. Who gave you the address? Not Count Spicca?"

"No."

Orsino hesitated to say more. He did not like to admit that he had received the address from Maria Consuelo's maid, and it might seem incredible that the woman should have given the information unasked. At the same time the fact that the address was to all intents and purposes a false one tallied with the maid's spontaneous

statement in regard to her mistress's mental alienation.

"Why will you not tell me?" asked Maria Consuelo.

"The answer involves a question which does not concern me. The address was evidently intended to deceive me. The person who gave it attempted to deceive me about a far graver matter too. Let us say no more about it. Of course you never got the letter?"

"Of course not."

A short silence followed which Orsino felt to be rather awkward. Maria Consuelo looked at him suddenly. "Did my maid tell you?" she asked.

"Yes—since you ask me. She met me in the corridor after my last visit and thrust the address upon me."

"I thought so," said Maria Consuelo.

"You have suspected her before?"

"What was the other deception?"

"That is a more serious matter. The woman is your trusted servant. At least you must have trusted her when you took her——"

"That does not follow. What did she try to make you believe?"

"It is hard to tell you. For all I know she may have been instructed; you may have instructed her yourself. One stumbles upon odd things in life, sometimes."

"You called yourself my friend once, Don Orsino."

"If you will let me, I will call myself so still."

"Then, in the name of friendship, tell me what the woman said!" Maria Consuelo spoke with sudden energy, touching his arm quickly with an unconscious gesture.

"Will you believe me?"

"Are you accustomed to being doubted, that you ask?"

"No. But this thing is very strange."

"Do not keep me waiting—it hurts me!"

"The woman stopped me as I was going away. I had never spoken to

her. She knew my name. She told me that you were—how shall I say?—mentally deranged."

Maria Consuelo started and turned very pale. "She told you that I was mad?" Her voice sank to a whisper.

"That is what she said."

Orsino watched her narrowly. She evidently believed him. Then she sank back in her chair with a stifled cry of horror, covering her eyes with her hands. "And you might have believed it!" she exclaimed. "You might really have believed it—you!"

The cry came from her heart, and would have shown Orsino what weight she still attached to his opinion had he not himself been too suddenly and deeply interested in the principal question to pay attention to details.

"She made the statement very clearly," he said. "What could have been her object in the lie?"

"What object? Ah—if I knew that——"

Maria Consuelo rose and paced the room, her head bent and her hands nervously clasping and unclasping. Orsino stood by the empty fireplace, watching her.

"You will send the woman away of course?" he said, in a questioning tone.

But she shook her head and her anxiety seemed to increase.

"Is it possible that you will submit to such a thing from a servant?" he asked in astonishment.

"I have submitted to much," she answered in a low voice.

"The inevitable, of course. But to keep a maid whom you can turn away at any moment——"

"Yes—but can I?" She stopped and looked him. "Oh, if I only could—if you knew how I hate the woman——"

"But then——"

"Yes?"

"Do you mean to tell me that you are in some way in her power, so that you are bound to keep her always?"

Maria Consuelo hesitated a moment.

"Are you in her power?" asked Orsino a second time. He did not like the idea and his black brows bent themselves rather angrily.

"No—not directly. She is imposed upon me."

"By circumstances?"

"No, again; by a person, who has the power to impose much upon me. But this! Oh, this is almost too much! To be called mad!"

"Then do not submit to it."

Orsino spoke decisively, with a kind of authority which surprised himself. He was amazed and righteously angry at the situation so suddenly revealed to him, undefined as it was. He saw that he was touching a great trouble and his natural energy bid him lay violent hands on it and root it out if possible.

For some minutes Maria Consuelo did not speak, but continued to pace the room, evidently in great anxiety. Then she stopped before him.

"It is easy for you to say, 'Do not submit,' when you do not understand," she said. "If you knew what my life is, you would look at this in another way. I must submit, I cannot do otherwise."

"If you would tell me something more I might help you," answered Orsino.

"You?" She paused. "I believe you would, if you could," she added, thoughtfully.

"You know that I would. Perhaps I can, as it is, in ignorance, if you will direct me."

A sudden light gleamed in Maria Consuelo's eyes and then died away as quickly as it had come. "After all, what could you do?" she asked with a change of tone, as though she were somehow disappointed. "What could you do that others would not do as well, if they could, and with a better right?"

"Unless you will tell me, how can I know?"

"Yes—if I could tell you."

She went and sat down in her former seat and Orsino took a chair beside her. He had expected to renew the acquaintance in a very different way, and that he should spend half an hour with Maria Consuelo in talking about apartments, about the heat and about the places she had visited. Instead, circumstances had made the conversation an intimate one, full of an absorbing interest to both. Orsino found that he had forgotten much which pleased him strangely now that it was again brought before him. He had forgotten most of all, it seemed, that an unexplained sympathy attracted him to her, and her to him. He wondered at the strength of it, and found it hard to understand that last meeting with her in the spring. "Is there any way of helping you, without knowing your secret?" he asked in a low voice.

"No. But I thank you for the wish."

"Are you sure there is no way? Quite sure?"

"Quite sure."

"May I say something that strikes me?"

"Say anything you choose."

"There is a plot against you. You seem to know it. Have you never thought of plotting on your side?"

"I have no one to help me."

"You have me, if you will take my help. And you have Spicca. You might do better, but you might do worse. Between us we might accomplish something."

Maria Consuelo had started at Spicca's name. She seemed very nervous that day. "Do you know what you are saying?" she asked, after a moment's thought.

"Nothing that should offend you, at least."

"No. But you are proposing that I should ally myself with the man of all others whom I have reason to hate."

"You hate Spicca?" Orsino was passing from one surprise to another.

"Whether I hate him or not, is another matter. I ought to."

"At all events he does not hate you."

"I know he does not. That makes it no easier for me. I could not accept his help."

"All this is so mysterious that I do not know what to say," said Orsino, thoughtfully. "The fact remains, and it is bad enough. You need help urgently. You are in the power of a servant who tells your friends that you are insane and thrusts false addresses upon them, for purposes which I cannot explain."

"Nor I either, though I may guess."

"It is worse and worse. You cannot even be sure of the motives of this woman, though you know the person or persons by whom she is forced upon you. You cannot get rid of her yourself, and you will not let any one else help you."

"Not Count Spicca."

"And yet I am sure that he would do much for you. Can you not even tell me why you hate him, or ought to hate him?"

Maria Consuelo hesitated and looked into Orsino's eyes for a moment. "Can I trust you?" she asked.

"Implicitly."

"He killed my husband."

Orsino uttered a low exclamation of horror. In the deep silence which followed he heard Maria Consuelo draw her breath once or twice sharply through her closed teeth, as though she were in great pain. "I do not wish it known," she said presently, in a changed voice. "I do not know why I told you."

"You can trust me."

"I must—since I have spoken."

In the surprise caused by the startling confidence Orsino suddenly felt that his capacity for sympathy had grown to great dimensions. If he had been a woman the tears would have stood in his eyes. Being what he was, he felt them in his heart. It

was clear that she had loved the dead man very dearly. In the light of this evident fact, it was hard to explain her conduct towards Orsino during the winter and especially at their last meeting.

For a long time neither spoke again. Orsino, indeed, had nothing to say at first, for nothing he could say could reasonably be supposed to be of any use. He had learned the existence of something like a tragedy in Maria Consuelo's life, and he seemed to be learning the first lesson of friendship, which teaches sympathy. It was not an occasion for making insignificant phrases expressing his regret at her loss, and the language he needed in order to say what he meant was unfamiliar to his lips. He was silent, therefore, but his young face was grave and thoughtful, and his eyes sought hers from time to time as though trying to discover and forestall her wishes. At last she glanced at him quickly, then looked down, and at last spoke to him. "You will not make me regret having told you this, will you?" she asked.

"No. I promise you that."

So far as Orsino could understand the words meant very little. He was not very communicative, as a rule, and would certainly not tell what he had heard, so that the promise was easily given and easy to keep. If he did not break it, he did not see that she could have any further cause for regretting her confidence in him. Nevertheless, by way of reassuring her, he thought it best to repeat what he had said in different words. "You may be quite sure that whatever you choose to tell me is in safe keeping," he said. "And you may be sure, too, that if it is in my power to do you a service of any kind, you will find me ready, and more than ready, to help you."

"Thank you," she answered, looking earnestly at him.

"Whether the matter be small or great," he added, meeting her eyes.

Perhaps she expected to find more

curiosity on his part, and fancied that he would ask some further question. He did not understand the meaning of her look.

"I believe you," she said at last. "I am too much in need of a friend to doubt you."

"You have found one."

"I do not know. I am not sure. There are other things——" she stopped suddenly and looked away.

"What other things?"

But Maria Consuelo did not answer. Orsino knew that she was thinking of all that had once passed between them. He wondered whether, if he led the way, she would press him as she had done at their last meeting. If she did, he wondered what he should say. He had been very cold then, far colder than he was now. He now felt drawn to her, as in the first days of their acquaintance. He felt always that he was on the point of understanding her, and yet that he was waiting for something which should help him to pass that point. "What other things?" he asked, repeating his question. "Do you mean that there are reasons which may prevent me from being a good friend of yours?"

"I am afraid there are. I do not know."

"I think you are mistaken, madam. Will you name some of those reasons, or even one?"

Maria Consuelo did not answer at once. She glanced at him, looked down, and then her eyes met his again. "Do you think that you are the kind of man a woman chooses for her friend?" she asked at length, with a faint smile.

"I have not thought of the matter——"

"But you should, before offering your friendship."

"Why? If I feel a sincere sympathy for your trouble, if I am——" he hesitated, weighing his words—"if I am personally attached to you, why can I not help you? I am honest, and in earnest. May I say as much as that of myself?"

"I believe you are."

"Then I cannot see that I am not the sort of man whom a woman might take for a friend when a better is not at hand."

"And do you believe in friendship, Don Orsino?" asked Maria Consuelo quietly.

"I have heard it said that it is not wise to disbelieve anything nowadays," answered Orsino.

"True—and the word 'friend' has such a pretty sound!" She laughed, for the first time since he had entered the room.

"Then it is you who are the unbeliever, madam. Is not that a sign that you need no friend at all, and that your questions are not seriously meant?"

"Perhaps. Who knows?"

"Do you know, yourself?"

"No." Again she laughed a little, and then grew suddenly grave.

"I never knew a woman who needed a friend more urgently than you do," said Orsino. "I do not in the least understand your position. The little you have told me makes it clear enough that there have been and still are unusual circumstances in your life. One thing I see. That woman whom you call your maid is forced upon you against your will, to watch you, and is privileged to tell lies about you which may do you a great injury. I do not ask why you are obliged to suffer her presence, but I see that you must, and I guess that you hate it. Would it be an act of friendship to free you from her or not?"

"At present it would not be an act of friendship," answered Maria Consuelo thoughtfully.

"That is very strange. Do you mean to say that you submit voluntarily——"

"The woman is a condition imposed upon me. I cannot tell you more."

"And no friend, no friendly help can change the condition, I suppose?"

"I did not say that. But such help is beyond your power, Don Orsino," she added, turning towards him rather

suddenly. "Let us not talk of this any more. Believe me, nothing can be done. You have sometimes acted strangely with me, but I really think you would help me if you could. Let that be the state of our acquaintance. You are willing, and I believe that you are. Let that be our compact, nothing more. But you can perhaps help me in another way, a smaller way. I want a habitation of some kind for the winter, for I am tired of camping out in hotels. You who know your own city so well can name some person who will undertake the matter."

"I know the very man," said Orsino promptly.

"Will you write out the address for me?"

"It is not necessary. I mean myself."

"I could not let you take so much trouble," protested Maria Consuelo.

But she accepted, nevertheless, after a little hesitation. For some time they discussed the relative advantages of the various habitable quarters of the city, both glad, perhaps, to find an almost indifferent subject of conversation, and both relatively happy merely in being together. The talk made one of those restful interludes which are so necessary, and often so hard to produce, between two people whose thoughts run upon a strong common interest, and who find it difficult to exchange half a dozen words without being led back to the absorbing topic.

What had been said had produced a decided effect upon Orsino. He had come expecting to take up the acquaintance on a new footing, but ten minutes had not elapsed before he had found himself as much interested as ever in Maria Consuelo's personality, and far more interested in her life than he had ever been before. While talking with more or less indifference about the chances of securing a suitable apartment for the winter, Orsino listened with an odd sensation of pleasure to every tone of his companion's voice and watched every changing expression of the striking

face. He wondered whether he were not perhaps destined to love her sincerely as he had already loved her in a boyish, capricious fashion which would no longer be natural to him now. But for the present he was sure that he did not love her, and that he desired nothing but her sympathy for himself, and to feel sympathy for her. Those were the words he used, and he did not explain them to his own intelligence in any very definite way. He was conscious, indeed, that they meant more than formerly, but the same was true of almost everything that came into his life, and he did not therefore attach any especial importance to the fact. He was altogether much more in earnest than when he had first met Maria Consuelo; he was capable of deeper feeling, of stronger determination, and of more decided action in all matters, and though he did not say so to himself he was none the less aware of the change.

"Shall we make an appointment for to-morrow?" he asked, after they had been talking some time.

"Yes—but there is one thing I wanted to ask you——"

"What is that?" inquired Orsino, seeing that she hesitated.

The faint colour rose in her cheeks, but she looked straight into his eyes, with a kind of fearless expression, as though she were facing a danger. "Tell me," she said, "in Rome, where everything is known and every one talks so much, will it not be thought strange that you and I should be driving about together, looking for a house for me? Tell me the truth."

"What can people say?" asked Orsino.

"Many things. Will they say them?"

"If they do, I can make them stop talking."

"That means that they will talk, does it not? Would you like that?"

There was a sudden change in her face, with a look of doubt and anxious perplexity. Orsino saw it and felt that she was putting him upon his honour,

and that whatever the doubt might be it had nothing to do with her trust in him. Six months earlier he would not have hesitated to demonstrate that her fears were empty, but he felt that six months earlier she might not have yielded to his reasoning. It was instinctive, but his instinct was not mistaken. "I think you are right," he said slowly. "We should not do it. I will send my architect with you."

There was enough regret in the tone to show that he was making a considerable sacrifice. A little delicacy means more when it comes from a strong man, than when it is the natural expression of an over-refined and somewhat effeminate character. And Orsino was rapidly developing a strength of which other people were conscious. Maria Consuelo was pleased, though she, too, was perhaps sorry to give up the projected plan. "After all," she said thoughtlessly, "you can come and see me here, if—"

She stopped and blushed again, more deeply this time; but she turned her face away and in the half light the change of colour was hardly noticeable.

"You were going to say 'if you care to see me,'" said Orsino. "I am glad you did not say it. It would not have been kind."

"Yes—I was going to say that," she answered quietly. "But I will not."

"Thank you."

"Why do you thank me?"

"For not hurting me."

"Do you think that I would hurt you willingly, in any way?"

"I would rather not think so. You did once."

The words slipped from his lips almost before he had time to realise what they meant. He was thinking of the night when she had drawn up the carriage window, leaving him standing on the pavement, and of her repeated refusals to see him afterwards. It seemed long ago, and the hurt had not really been so sharp as he now fancied that it must have been,

judging from what he now felt. She looked at him quickly as though wondering what he would say next. "I never meant to be unkind," she said. "I have often asked myself whether you could say as much."

It was Orsino's turn to change colour. He was young enough for that, and the blood rose slowly in his dark cheeks. He thought again of their last meeting, and of what he had heard as he shut the door after him on that day. Perhaps he would have spoken, but Maria Consuelo was sorry for what she had said, and a little ashamed of her weakness, as indeed she had some cause to be, and she immediately turned back to a former point of the conversation, not too far removed from what had last been said. "You see," said she, "I was right to ask you whether people would talk. And I am grateful to you for telling me the truth. It is a first proof of friendship, of something better than our old relations. Will you send me your architect to-morrow, since you are so kind as to offer his help?"

After arranging for the hour of meeting Orsino rose to take his leave. "May I come to-morrow?" he asked. "People will not talk about that," he added with a smile.

"You can ask for me. I may be out. If I am at home I shall be glad to see you."

She spoke coldly, and Orsino saw that she was looking over his shoulder. He turned instinctively and saw that the door was open and Spicca was standing just outside, looking in and apparently waiting for a word from Maria Consuelo before entering.

CHAPTER XIX.

As Orsino had no reason whatever for avoiding Spicca he naturally waited a moment instead of leaving the room immediately. He looked at the old man with a new interest as the latter came forward. He had never seen and probably would never see again a man taking the hand of a woman

whose husband he had destroyed. He stood a little back, and Spicca passed him as he met Maria Consuelo. Orsino watched the faces of both.

Madame d'Aranjuez put out her hand mechanically and with evident reluctance, and Orsino guessed that but for his own presence she would not have given it. The expression in her face changed rapidly from that which had been there when they had been alone, hardening very quickly until it reminded Orsino of a certain mask of the Medusa which had once made an impression upon his imagination. Her eyes were fixed and the pupils grew small while the singular golden yellow colour of the iris flashed disagreeably. She did not bend her head as she silently gave her hand.

Spicca, too, seemed momentarily changed. He was as pale and thin as ever, but his face softened oddly; certain lines which contributed to his usually bitter and sceptical expression disappeared, while others became visible which changed his look completely. He bowed with more deference than he affected with other women, and Orsino fancied that he would have held Maria Consuelo's hand a moment longer if she had not withdrawn it as soon as it had touched his.

If Orsino had not already known that Spicca often saw her, he would have been amazed at the Count's visit, considering what she had said of the man. As it was, he wondered what power Spicca had over her to oblige her to receive him, and he wondered in vain. The conclusion which forced itself before him was that Spicca was the person who imposed the serving woman upon Maria Consuelo. But her behaviour towards him, on the other hand, was not that of a person obliged by circumstances to submit to the caprices and dictation of another. Judging by the appearance of the two, it seemed more probable that the power was on the other side, and might be used mercilessly on occasion.

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"I hope I am not disturbing your plans," said Spicca, in a tone which was almost humble, and very unlike his usual voice. "Were you going out together?"

He shook hands with Orsino, avoiding his glance, as the young man thought.

"No," answered Maria Consuelo briefly. "I was not going out."

"I am just going away," said Orsino by way of explanation, and he made as though he would take his leave.

"Do not go yet," said Maria Consuelo. Her look made the words imperative.

Spicca glanced from one to the other with a sort of submissive protest, and then all three sat down. Orsino wondered what part he was expected to play in the trio, and wished himself away in spite of the interest he felt in the situation.

Maria Consuelo began to talk in a careless tone which reminded him of his first meeting with her in Gouache's studio. She told Spicca that Orsino had promised her his architect as a guide in her search for a lodging.

"What sort of person is he?" inquired Spicca, evidently for the sake of making conversation.

"Contini is a man of business," Orsino answered. "An odd fellow, full of talent, and a musical genius. One would not expect very much of him at first, but he will do all that Madame d'Aranjuez needs."

"Otherwise you would not have recommended him, I suppose," said Spicca.

"Certainly not," replied Orsino, looking at him.

"You must know, madam," said Spicca, "that Don Orsino is an excellent judge of men."

He emphasised the last word in a way that seemed unnecessary. Maria Consuelo had recovered all her equanimity and laughed carelessly. "How you say that!" she exclaimed. "Is it a warning?"

"Against what?" asked Orsino.

"Probably against you," she said. "Count Spicca likes to throw out vague hints; but I will do him the credit to say that they generally mean something." She added the last words rather scornfully.

An expression of pain passed over the old man's face. But he said nothing, though it was not like him to pass by a challenge of the kind. Without in the least understanding the reason of the sensation, Orsino felt sorry for him. "Among men Count Spicca's opinion is worth having," he said quietly.

Maria Consuelo looked at him in some surprise. The phrase sounded like a rebuke, and her eyes betrayed her annoyance. "How delightful it is to hear one man defend another!" she laughed.

"I fancy Count Spicca does not stand much in need of defence," replied Orsino, without changing his tone.

"He himself is, the best judge of that."

Spicca raised his weary eyes to hers and looked at her for a moment before he answered. "Yes," he said. "I think I am the best judge. But I am not accustomed to being defended, least of all against you, madam. The sensation is a new one."

Orsino felt himself out of place. He was more warmly attached to Spicca than he knew, and though he was at that time not far removed from loving Maria Consuelo, her tone in speaking to the old man, which said far more than her words, jarred upon him, and he could not help taking his friend's part. On the other hand the ugly truth that Spicca had caused the death of Aranjuez more than justified Maria Consuelo in her hatred. Behind all, there was evidently some good reason why Spicca came to see her, and there was some bond between the two which made it impossible for her to refuse his visits. It was clear, too, that though she hated him he felt some kind of strong affection for her. In her presence he was very unlike his daily self.

Again Orsino moved and looked at her, as though asking her permission to go away. But she refused it with an imperative gesture and a look of annoyance. She evidently did not wish to be left alone with the old man. Without paying any further attention to the latter she began to talk to Orsino. She took no trouble to conceal what she felt, and the impression grew upon Orsino that Spicca would have gone away after a quarter of an hour if he had not either possessed a sort of right to stay or if he had not had some important object in view in remaining.

"I suppose there is nothing to do in Rome at this time of year," she said.

Orsino told her that there was absolutely nothing to do. Not a theatre was open, not a friend was in town. Rome was a wilderness. Rome was an amphitheatre on a day when there was no performance, when the lions were asleep, the gladiators drinking, and the martyrs unoccupied. He tried to say something amusing, and found it hard.

Spicca was very patient, but evidently determined to outstay Orsino. From time to time he made a remark, to which Maria Consuelo paid very little attention if she took any notice of it at all. Orsino could not make up his mind whether to stay or to go. The latter course would evidently displease Maria Consuelo, whereas by remaining he was clearly annoying Spicca and was perhaps causing him pain. It was a nice question, and while trying to make conversation he weighed the arguments in his mind. Strange to say he decided in favour of Spicca. The decision was to some extent an index of the state of his feelings towards Madame d'Aranjuez. If he had been quite in love with her, he would have stayed. If he had wished to make her love him, he would have stayed also. As it was, his friendship for the old Count went before other considerations. At the same time he hoped to manage matters so

as not to incur Maria Consuelo's displeasure. He found it harder than he had expected. After he had made up his mind, he continued to talk during three or four minutes and then made his excuse. "I must be going," he said quietly. "I have a number of things to do before night, and I must see Contini in order to give him time to make a list of apartments for you to see to-morrow."

He took his hat and rose. He was not prepared for Maria Consuelo's answer.

"I asked you to stay," she said, coldly and very distinctly.

Spicca did not allow his expression to change. Orsino stared at her. "I am very sorry, madam, but there are many reasons which oblige me to disobey you."

Maria Consuelo bit her lip and her eyes gleamed angrily. She glanced at Spicca as though hoping that he would go away with Orsino. But he did not move. It was more and more clear that he had a right to stay if he pleased. Orsino was already bowing before her. Instead of giving her hand she rose quickly and led him towards the door. He opened it and they stood together on the threshold. "Is this the way you help me?" she asked, almost fiercely, though in a whisper.

"Why do you receive him at all?" he inquired, instead of answering.

"Because I cannot refuse."

"But you might send him away?"

She hesitated, and looked into his eyes. "Shall I?"

"If you wish to be alone, and if you can. It is no affair of mine."

She turned swiftly, leaving Orsino standing in the door, and went to Spicca's side. He had risen when she rose and was standing at the other side of the room, watching. "I have a bad headache," she said coldly. "You will forgive me if I ask you to go with Don Orsino."

"A lady's invitation to leave her house, madam, is the only one which a man cannot refuse," said Spicca gravely.

He bowed and followed Orsino out of the room, closing the door behind him. The scene had produced a very disagreeable impression upon Orsino. Had he not known the worst part of the secret and consequently understood what good cause Maria Consuelo had for not wishing to be alone with Spicca, he would have been utterly revolted and for ever repelled by her brutality. No other word could express adequately her conduct towards the Count. Even knowing what he did, he wished that she had controlled her temper better and he was more than ever sorry for Spicca. It did not even cross his mind that the latter might have intentionally provoked Aranjuez and killed him purposely. He felt somehow that Spicca was in a measure the injured party and must have been in that position from the beginning, whatever the strange story might be. As the two descended the steps together Orsino glanced at his companion's pale, drawn features and was sure that the man was to be pitied. It was almost a womanly instinct, far too delicate for such a hardy nature, and dependent perhaps upon that sudden opening of his sympathies which resulted from meeting Maria Consuelo. I think that, on the whole, in such cases, though the woman's character may be formed by intimacy with man's, with apparent results, the impression upon the man is momentarily deeper, as the woman's gentler instincts are in a way reflected in his heart.

Spicca recovered himself quickly, however. He took out his case and offered Orsino a cigarette. "So you have renewed your acquaintance," he said quietly.

"Yes, in rather odd circumstances," answered Orsino. "I feel as though I owed you an apology, Count, and yet I do not see what there is to apologise for. I tried to go away more than once."

"You cannot possibly make excuses to me for Madame d'Aranjuez's peculiarities, my friend. Besides, I

admit that she has a right to treat me as she pleases. That does not prevent me from going to see her every day."

"You must have strong reasons for bearing such treatment."

"I have," answered Spicca thoughtfully and sadly. "Very strong reasons. I will tell you one of those which brought me to-day. I wished to see you two together."

Orsino stopped in his walk, after the manner of Italians, and he looked at Spicca. He was hot tempered when provoked, and he might have resented the speech if it had come from any other man. But he spoke quietly. "Why did you wish to see us together?" he asked.

"Because I am foolish enough to think sometimes that you suit one another, and might love one another."

Probably nothing which Spicca could have said could have surprised Orsino more than such a plain statement. He grew suspicious at once, but Spicca's look was that of a man in earnest.

"I do not think I understand you," answered Orsino. "But I think you are touching a subject which is better left alone."

"I think not," returned Spicca unmoved.

"Then let us agree to differ," said Orsino a little more warmly.

"We cannot do that. I am in a position to make you agree with me, and I will. I am responsible for that lady's happiness. I am responsible before God and man."

Something in the words made a deep impression upon Orsino. He had never heard Spicca use anything approaching to solemn language before. He knew at least one part of the meaning which showed Spicca's remorse for having killed Aranjuez, and he knew that the old man meant what he said, and meant it from his heart.

"Do you understand me now?" asked Spicca, slowly inhaling the smoke of his cigarette.

"Not altogether. If you desire the

happiness of Madame d'Aranjuez why do you wish us to fall in love with each other? It strikes me that——" he stopped.

"Because I wish you would marry her."

"Marry her!" Orsino had not thought of that, and his words expressed a surprise which was not calculated to please Spicca.

The old man's weary eyes suddenly grew keen and fierce and Orsino could hardly meet their look. Spicca's nervous fingers seized the young man's tough arm and closed upon it with surprising force. "I would advise you to think of that possibility before making any more visits," he said, his weak voice suddenly clearing. "We were talking together a few weeks ago. Do you remember what I said. I would do to any man by whom harm comes to her? Yes, you remember well enough. I know what you answered, and I dare say you meant it. But I was in earnest, too."

"I think you are threatening me, Count Spicca," said Orsino, flushing slowly but meeting the other's look with unflinching coolness.

"No, I am not. And I will not let you quarrel with me either, Orsino. I have a right to say this to you where she is concerned, a right you do not dream of. You cannot quarrel about that."

Orsino did not answer at once. He saw that Spicca was very much in earnest, and was surprised that his manner now should be less calm and collected than on the occasion of their previous conversation, when the Count had taken enough wine to turn the heads of most men. He did not doubt in the least the statement Spicca made. It agreed exactly with what Maria Consuelo herself had said of him. And the statement certainly changed the face of the situation. Orsino admitted to himself that he had never before thought of marrying Madame d'Aranjuez. He had not even taken into consideration the consequences of loving her and of being loved by her in

return. The moment he thought of a possible marriage as the result of such a mutual attachment, he realised the enormous difficulties which stood in the way of such a union, and his first impulse was to give up visiting her altogether. What Spicca said was at once reasonable and unreasonable. Maria Consuelo's husband was dead, and she doubtless expected to marry again. Orsino had no right to stand in the way of others who might present themselves as suitors. But it was beyond belief that Spicca should expect Orsino to marry her himself, knowing Rome and the Romans as he did.

The two had been standing still in the shade. Orsino began to walk forward again before he spoke. Something in his own reflections shocked him. He did not like to think that an impassable social barrier existed between Maria Consuelo and himself. Yet, in his total ignorance of her origin and previous life the stories which had been circulated about her recalled themselves with unpleasant distinctness. Nothing that Spicca had said when they had dined together had made the matter any clearer, though the assurance that the deceased Aranjuez had come to his end by Spicca's instrumentality sufficiently contradicted the worst, if also the least credible, point in the tales which had been repeated by the gossips early in the previous winter. All the rest belonged entirely to the category of the unknown. Yet Spicca spoke seriously of a possible marriage and had gone to the length of wishing that it might be brought about. At last Orsino spoke. "You say that you have a right to say what you have said," he began. "In that case I think I have a right to ask a question which you ought to answer. You talk of my marrying Madame d'Aranjuez. You ought to tell me whether that is possible."

"Possible?" cried Spicca almost angrily. "What do you mean?"

"I mean this. You know us all, as you know me. You know the

enormous prejudices in which we are brought up. You know perfectly well that although I am ready to laugh at some of them, there are others at which I do not laugh. Yet you refused to tell me who Madame d'Aranjuez was when I asked you the other day. I do not even know her father's name, much less her mother's——"

"No," answered Spicca. "That is quite true, and I see no necessity for telling you either. But, as you say, you have some right to ask. I will tell you this much. There is nothing in the circumstances of her birth which could hinder her marriage into any honourable family. Does that satisfy you?"

Orsino saw that whether he were satisfied or not, he was to get no further information for the present. He might believe Spicca's statement or not, as he pleased, but he knew that whatever the peculiarities of the melancholy old duellist's character might be, he never took the trouble to invent a falsehood and was as ready as ever to support his words. On this occasion no one could have doubted him, for there was an unusual ring of sincere feeling in what he said. Orsino could not help wondering what the tie between him and Madame d'Aranjuez could be, for it evidently had the power to make Spicca submit without complaint to something worse than ordinary unkindness, and to make him defend on all occasions the name and character of the woman who treated him so harshly. It must be a very close bond, Orsino thought. Spicca acted very much like a man who loves very sincerely and quite hopelessly. There was something very sad in the idea that he perhaps loved Maria Consuelo, at his age, broken down as he was, and old before his time. The contrast between them was so great that it must have been grotesque if it had not been pathetic.

Little more passed between the two men on that day before they separated. To Spicca Orsino seemed indifferent, and the older man's reticence after his

sudden outburst did not tend to prolong the meeting.

Orsino went in search of Contini and explained what was needed of him. He was to make a brief list of desirable apartments to let and was to accompany Madame d'Aranjuez on the following morning in order to see them.

Contini was delighted, and set out about the work at once. Perhaps he secretly hoped that the lady might be induced to take a part of one of the new houses, but the idea had nothing to do with his satisfaction. He was to spend several hours in the sole society of a lady, of a genuine lady who was, moreover, young and beautiful. He read the little morning paper too assiduously not to have noticed the name and pondered over the descriptions of Madame d'Aranjuez on the many occasions when she had been mentioned by the reporters during the previous year. He was too young and too thoroughly Italian not to appreciate the good fortune which now fell into his way, and he promised himself a morning of uninterrupted enjoyment. He wondered whether the lady could be induced by excessive fatigue and thirst to accept a water-ice at Nazzari's, and he planned his list of apartments in such a way as to bring her to the neighbourhood of the Piazza di Spagna at an hour when the proposition might seem most agreeable and natural.

Orsino stayed in the office during the hot September morning, busying himself with the endless details of which he was now master, and thinking from time to time of Maria Consuelo. He intended to go and see her in the afternoon, and he, like Contini, planned what he should do and say. But his plans were all unsatisfactory, and once he found himself staring at the blank wall opposite his table in a state of idle abstraction long unfamiliar to him.

Soon after twelve o'clock Contini came back, hot and radiant. Maria Consuelo had refused the water-ice,

but the charm of her manner had repaid the architect for the disappointment. Orsino asked whether she had decided upon any dwelling.

"She has taken the apartment in the Palazzo Barberini," answered Contini. "I suppose she will bring her family in the autumn."

"Her family? She has none. She is alone."

"Alone in that place! How rich she must be!" Contini found the remains of a cigar somewhere and lighted it thoughtfully.

"I do not know whether she is rich or not," said Orsino. "I never thought about it."

He began to work at his books again, while Contini sat down and fanned himself with a bundle of papers. "She admires you very much, Don Orsino," said he, after a pause.

Orsino looked up sharply. "What do you mean by that?" he asked.

"I mean that she talked of nothing but you, and in the most flattering way."

In the oddly close intimacy which had grown up between the two men it did not seem strange that Orsino should smile at speeches which he would not have liked if they had come from any one but the poor architect. "What did she say?" he asked with idle curiosity.

"She said it was wonderful to think what you had done. That of all the Roman princes you were the only one who had energy and character enough to throw over the old prejudices and take an occupation. That it was all the more creditable because you had done it from moral reasons and not out of necessity or love of money. And she said a great many other things of the same kind."

"Oh!" ejaculated Orsino, looking at the wall opposite.

"It is a pity she is a widow," observed Contini.

"Why?"

"She would make such a beautiful princess."

"You must be mad, Contini!" ex-

claimed Orsino, half-pleased and half-irritated. "Do not talk of such follies."

"Ah well! Forgive me," answered the architect a little humbly. "I am not you, you know, and my head is not yours—nor my name—nor my heart either."

Contini sighed, puffed at his cigar and took up some papers. He was already a little in love with Maria Consuelo, and the idea that any man might marry her if he pleased, but would not, was incomprehensible to him.

The day wore on. Orsino finished his work as thoroughly as though he had been a paid clerk, put everything in order and went away. Late in the afternoon he went to see Maria Consuelo. He knew that she would usually be already out at that hour, and he fancied that he was leaving something to chance in the matter of finding her, though an unacknowledged instinct told him that she would stay at home after the fatigue of the morning.

"We shall not be interrupted by Count Spicca to-day," she said, as he sat down beside her.

In spite of what he knew, the hard tone of her voice roused again in Orsino that feeling of pity for the old man which he had felt on the previous day. "Does it not seem to you," he asked, "that if you receive him at all, you might at least conceal something of your hatred for him?"

"Why should I? Have you forgotten what I told you yesterday?"

"It would be hard to forget that, though you told me no details. But it is not easy to imagine how you can see him at all if he killed your husband deliberately in a duel."

"It is impossible to put the case more plainly!" exclaimed Maria Consuelo.

"Do I offend you?"

"No; not exactly."

"Forgive me, if I do. If Spicca, as I suppose, was the unwilling cause of your great loss he is much to be pitied. I am not sure that he does

not deserve almost as much pity as you do."

"How can you say that, even if the rest were true?"

"Think of what he must suffer. He is devotedly attached to you."

"I know he is. You have told me that before, and I have given you the same answer. I want neither his attachment nor his devotion."

"Then refuse to see him."

"I cannot."

"We come back to the same point again," said Orsino.

"We always shall if you talk about this. There is no other issue. Things are what they are and I cannot change them."

"Do you know," said Orsino, "that all this mystery is a very serious hindrance to friendship?"

Maria Consuelo was silent for a moment. "Is it?" she asked presently. "Have you always thought so?"

The question was a hard one to answer. "You have always seemed mysterious to me," replied Orsino. "Perhaps that is a great attraction. But instead of learning the truth about you, I am finding out that there are more and more secrets in your life which I must not know."

"Why should you know them?"

"Because——" Orsino checked himself, almost with a start. He was annoyed at the words which had been so near his lips, for he had been on the point of saying, "Because I love you"; and he was intimately convinced that he did not love her. He could not in the least understand why the phrase was so ready to be spoken. Could it be, he asked himself, that Maria Consuelo was trying to make him say the words, and that her will, with her question, acted directly on his mind? He scouted the thought as soon as it presented itself, not only for its absurdity, but because it shocked some inner sensibility.

"What were you going to say?" asked Madame d'Aranjuez almost carelessly.

"Something that is best not said," he answered.

"Then I am glad you did not say it." She spoke quietly and unaffectedly. It needed little divination on her part to guess what the words might have been. Even if she wished them spoken, she would not have them spoken too lightly, for she had heard his love-speeches before, when they had meant very little.

Orsino suddenly turned the subject, as though he felt unsure of himself. He asked her about the result of her search in the morning. She answered that she had determined to take the apartment in the Palazzo Barberini.

"I believe it is a very large place," observed Orsino indifferently.

"Yes," she answered in the same tone. "I mean to receive this winter. But it will be a tiresome affair to furnish such a wilderness."

"I suppose you mean to establish yourself in Rome for several years?" His face expressed a satisfaction of which he was hardly conscious himself. Maria Consuelo noticed it. "You seem pleased," she said.

"How could I possibly not be?" he asked. Then he was silent. All his own words seemed to him to mean too much or too little. He wished she

would choose some subject of conversation and talk that he might listen. But she also was unusually silent.

He cut his visit short, very suddenly, and left her, saying that he hoped to find her at home as a general rule at that hour, quite forgetting that she would naturally be always out at the cool time towards evening.

He walked slowly homewards in the dusk, and did not remember to go to his solitary dinner until nearly nine o'clock. He was not pleased with himself, but he was involuntarily pleased by something he felt and would not have been insensible to if he had been given the choice. His old interest in Maria Consuelo was reviving, and yet was turning into something very different from what it had been.

He now boldly denied to himself that he was in love, and forced himself to speculate concerning the possibilities of friendship. In his young system it was absurd to suppose that a man could fall in love a second time with the same woman. He scoffed at himself, at the idea and at his own folly, having all the time a consciousness amounting to certainty of something very real and serious, by no means to be laughed at, overlooked, or despised.

(To be continued.)

CHAPTERS FROM SOME UNWRITTEN MEMOIRS.

MY WITCHES' CALDRON. IV.

I SUPPOSE the outer circuit of my own very limited wanderings must have been reached at the age of thirteen, or thereabouts, when my father took me and my little sister for the grand tour of Europe. We had of course lived in Paris and spent our summers in quiet sunny country places abroad with our grandparents, but this was to be something different from anything we had ever known before at St. Germain or Montmorency among the donkeys; Switzerland, and Venice, and Vienna, Germany and the Rhine! our young souls thrilled with expectation. And yet those early feasts of life are not unlike the miracle of the loaves and fishes; the twelve basketfuls that remain in after years are certainly even more precious than the feast itself.

We started one sleety summer morning. My father was pleased to be off and with our happiness. He had bought a grey wideawake hat for the journey, and he had a new sketch-book in his pocket, besides two smaller ones for us, which he produced as the steamer was starting. We sailed from London Bridge, and the decks were all wet and slippery as we came on board. We were scatter-brained little girls, although we looked demure enough in our mushroom and waterproofs. We had also prepared a travelling trousseau, which consisted of miscellaneous articles belonging to the fancy goods department of things in general, rather than to the usual outfit of an English gentleman's family. I was not without some diffidence about my luggage. I remember a draught-board, a large wooden work-box, a good many books, paint-boxes, and other odds and ends; but I felt that whatever else might be deficient our *new bonnets*

would bring us triumphantly out of every crisis. They were alike, but with a difference of blue and pink wreaths of acacia, and brilliant in ribbons to match, at a time when people affected less dazzling colours than they do now. Of course these treasures were not for the Channel and its mischances; they were carefully packed away and guarded by the draught-boards and work-boxes and the other contents of our trunk, and I may as well conclude the episode at once, for it is not quite without bearing upon what I am trying to recall. Alas for human expectations! When the happy moment came at last, and we had reached foreign parts and issued out of the hotel dressed and wreathed and triumphantly splendid, my father said: "My dear children, go back and put those bonnets away in your box, and don't ever wear them any more! Why you would be mobbed in these places if you walked out alone with such ribbons!" How the sun shone as he spoke; how my heart sank under the acacia trees. My sister was eleven years old, and didn't care a bit; but at thirteen and fourteen one's clothes begin to strike root. I felt disgraced, beheaded of my lovely bonnet, utterly crushed, and I turned away to hide my tears.

Now, there is a passage in the life of Charles Kingsley which, as I believe, concerned this very time and journey; and I am amused as I remember the tragedy of my bonnet to think of the different sacrifices which men and women have to pay to popular prejudice, casting their head-gear into the flames just as the people did in the times of Romola. We had started by the Packet-boat from London Bridge, as I have said, and immediately we came on board we had been kindly greeted by a family

group already established there, an elderly gentleman in clerical dress and a lady sitting with an umbrella in the drizzle of rain and falling smuts from the funnel. This was the Kingsley family, consisting of the Rector of Chelsea and his wife and his two sons (Charles Kingsley was the elder of the two), then going abroad for his health. It will now be seen that my recollections concern more historical head-dresses than our unlucky bonnets; associations which William Tell himself might not have disdained. Mr. Kingsley and his brother were wearing brown felt hats with very high and pointed crowns, and with very broad brims, of a different shape from my father's common-place felt. The hats worn by Mr. Kingsley and his brother were more like those well-known brims and peaks which have crowned so many poets' heads since then.

It was a stormy crossing; the waves were curling unpleasantly round about the boat; I sat by Mrs. Kingsley, miserable, uncomfortable, and watching in a dazed and hypnotised sort of way the rim of Charles Kingsley's hat as it rose and fell against the horrible horizon. He stood before us holding on to some ropes, and the horizon rose and fell, and the steamer pitched and tossed, and it seemed as if Time stood still. But we reached those further shores at last, and parted from our companions, and very soon afterwards my father told us with some amusement of the adventure which befel Mr. Charles Kingsley and his brother almost as soon as they landed and after they had parted from their parents. They were arrested by the police, who did not like the shape of their wideawakes. I may as well give the story in Mr. Kingsley's own words, which I found in his *Life* in an extract from a letter written immediately after the event to Mrs. Charles Kingsley at home:—

“‘Here we are at Treves,’ he says, ‘having been brought there under arrest with a gendarme from the

Mayor of Gettesburg, and liberated next morning with much laughter and many curses from the police here. However, we had the pleasure of spending a night in prison among fleas and felons, on the bare floor. The barbarians took our fishing-tackle for *Todt-instrumenten* and our wideawakes for Italian hats, and got it into their addle-pates that we were emissaries of Mazzini. . . .’”

Perhaps I can find some excuse for the “addle-pates” when I remember that proud and eager head, and that bearing so full of character and energy. One can imagine the author of *Alton Locke* not finding very great favour with foreign mouchards and gendarmes, and suggesting indefinite terrors and suspicions to their minds.

Fortunately for the lovers of nature, unfortunately for autobiographers, the dates of the years as they pass are not written up in big letters on the blue vaults overhead, though the seasons themselves are told in turn by the clouds and lights and by every waving tree and every country glade. And so, though one remembers the aspect of things, the years are apt to get a little shifted at times, and I cannot quite tell whether it was this year or that one following in which we found ourselves still in glorious summer-weather returning home from distant places, and coming back by Germany and by Weimar.

In common with most children, the stories of our father's youth always delighted and fascinated us, and we had often heard him speak of his own early days at college and in Germany, and of his happy stay at Pumpnickel-Weimar, where he went to Court and saw the great Goethe and was in love with the beautiful Amalia von X. And now coming to Weimar we found ourselves actually *alive* in his past somehow, almost living it alongside with him, just like Gogo in Mr. du Maurier's story. I suddenly find myself walking up

the centre of an empty shady street, and my father is pointing to a row of shutters on the first floor of a large and comfortable-looking house, "That is where Frau von X. used to live," he said. "How kind she was to us, and what a pretty girl Amalia was." And then a little further on we passed the house in the sunshine of a *plaz* in which he told us he himself had lodged with a friend; and then we came to the palace with the soldiers and sentries looking like toys wound up from the Burlington Arcade and going backwards and forwards with their spikes in front of their own striped boxes; and we saw the acacia trees with their cropped heads, and the iron gates; and we went across the court-yard into the palace and were shown the ball-room and the smaller saloons, and we stood on the shining floors and beheld the classic spot where for the first and only time in all his life, I believe, my father had invited the lovely Amalia to waltz. And then coming away all absorbed and delighted with our experiences in living backwards, my father suddenly said, "I wonder if old Weissenborne is still alive? He used to teach me German." And lo! as he spoke a tall, thin old man, in a broad-brimmed straw hat with a beautiful Pomeranian poodle running before him came stalking along with a newspaper under his arm. "Good gracious, that looks like — yes, that *is* Doctor Weissenborne. He is hardly changed a bit," said my father, stopping short for a moment, and then he too stepped forward quickly with an outstretched hand, and the old man in turn stopped, stared, frowned. "I am Thackeray, my name is Thackeray," said my father eagerly and shyly as was his way; and after another stare from the doctor, suddenly came a friendly lighting up and exclaiming and welcoming and hand-shaking and laughing, while the pretty white dog leapt up and down as much interested as we were in the meeting.

"You have grown so grey I did

not know you at first," said the doctor in English. And my father laughed and said he was a great deal greyer now than the doctor himself; then he introduced us to the old man, who shook us gravely by the fingertips with a certain austere friendliness, and once more he turned again with a happy, kind, grim face to my father. Yes, he had followed his career with interest; he had heard of him from this man and that man; he had read one of his books,—not all. Why had he never sent any, why had he never come back before? "You must bring your misses and all come and breakfast at my lodging," said Dr. Weissenborne.

"And is this your old dog?" my father asked, after accepting the doctor's invitation. Dr. Weissenborne shook his head. Alas! the old dog was no more, he died two years before. Meanwhile the young dog was very much there, frisking and careering in cheerful circles round about us. The doctor and his dog had just been starting for their daily walk in the woods when they met us and they now invited us to accompany them. We called at the lodging by the way to announce our return to breakfast and then started off together for the park. The park (I am writing of years and years ago) was a bright green little wood, with leaves and twigs and cheerful lights, with small trees not very thickly planted on the steep slopes, with many narrow paths wandering into green depths, and with seats erected at intervals along the way. On one of these seats the old professor showed us an inscription cut deep into the wood with a knife, "*Doctor W. and his dog.*" Who had carved it! He did not know. But besides this inscription, on every one of the benches where Goethe used to rest, and on every tree which used to shade his head, was written another inscription, invisible indeed, and yet which we seemed to read all along the way—"Here Goethe's life was spent; here he walked, here he rested; his feet have passed to and fro along this

narrow path-way. It leads to his garden-house."

It was lovely summer weather as I have said, that weather which used to be so common when one was young, and which I dare say our children still discover now, though we cannot always enjoy it. We came back with our friend the Doctor and breakfasted with him in his small apartment, in a room full of books, at a tiny table drawn to an open window; then after breakfast we sat in the Professor's garden among the nasturtiums. My sister and I were given books to read; they were translations for the use of students, I remember; and the old friends smoked together and talked over a hundred things. Amalia was married and had several children, she was away. Madame von Goethe was still in Weimar with her sons, and Fraulein von Pogwische, her sister, was also there. "They would be delighted to see you again," said the Professor. "We will go together, and leave the young misses here till our return." But not so; our father declared we also must be allowed to come. My recollections (according to the wont of such provoking things) here begin to fail me, and in the one particular which is of any interest, for though we visited Goethe's old house I can scarcely remember it at all, only that the Doctor said Madame von Goethe had moved after Goethe's death. She lived in a handsome house in the town, with a fine staircase running up between straight walls, and leading into a sort of open hall where, amid a good deal of marble and stateliness, stood two little unpretending ladies by a big round table piled with many books and papers. The ladies were Madame de Goethe and her sister. Doctor Weissenborne went first and announced an old friend, and then ensued more welcomings and friendly exclamations and quick recognitions on both sides, benevolently superintended by our Virgil. "And are you both as fond of reading novels as ever?" my father asked. The ladies laughed, they said, "Yes,

indeed," and pointed to a boxful of books which had just arrived, with several English novels among them, which they had been unpacking as we came in. Then the sons of the house were sent for,—kind and friendly and unassuming young men, walking in, and as much interested and pleased to witness their parents' pleasure as we were; not handsome, with nothing of their grandfather's noble aspect (as one sees it depicted), but with most charming and courteous ways. One was a painter, the mother told us, the other a musician. And while my father talked to the elder ladies, the young men took us younger ones in hand. They offered to show us the celebrated garden-house and asked us to drink tea there next day. And so it happened that once more we found ourselves being conducted through the little shady wood. But to be walking there with Goethe's family, with his grandsons and their mother, the Ottilie who had held the dying poet's hand to the last; to be going to his favourite resort where so much of his time was spent; to hear him so familiarly quoted and spoken of was something like hearing a distant echo of the great voice itself: something like seeing the skirts of his dressing-gown just waving before us. And at the age I was then impressions are so vivid that I have always all my life had a vague feeling of having been in Goethe's presence. We seemed to find something of it everywhere, most of all in the little garden-house, in the bare and simple room where he used to write. One of the kind young men went to the window and showed us something on the pane. What it was I know not clearly, but I think it was his name written with a diamond; and finally in the garden, at a wooden table, among trees and dancing shadows, we drank our tea, and I remember Wolfgang von Goethe handing a tea-cup, and the look of it, and suddenly the whole thing vanishes. There was a certain simple dignity and hospitality in it all which seems to belong to all the traditions of

hospitable Weimar, and my father's pleasure and happy emotion gave a value and importance to every tiny detail of that short but happy time. Even the people at the inn remembered him, and came out to greet him; but, only, alas! for human nature, they sent in such an enormous bill as we were departing on the evening of the second day, that he exclaimed in dismay to the waiter, "So much for sentimental recollections! Tell the host I shall never be able to afford to come back to Weimar again."

The waiter stared; I wonder if he delivered the message. The hotel-bill I have just mentioned was a real disappointment to my father, and, alas for disillusion! another more serious shock, a meeting which was no meeting, somewhat dashed the remembrance of Amalia von X.

It happened at Venice, a year or two after our visit to Weimar. We were breakfasting at a long table where a fat lady also sat a little way off, with a pale fat little boy beside her. She was stout, she was dressed in light green, she was silent, she was eating an egg. The *sala* of the great marble hotel was shaded from the blaze of sunshine, but stray gleams shot across the dim hall, falling on the palms and the orange trees beyond the lady, who gravely shifted her place as the sunlight dazzled her. Our own meal was also spread, and my sister and I were only waiting for my father to begin. He came in presently, saying he had been looking at the guest-book in the outer hall, and he had seen a name which had interested him very much. "Frau von Z. Geboren von X. It must be Amalia! She must be *here*—in the hotel," he said; and as he spoke he asked a waiter whether Madame von Z. was still in the hotel. "I believe that is Madame von Z.," said the waiter, pointing to the fat lady. The lady looked up and then went on with her egg, and my poor father turned away saying in a low, overwhelmed voice, "*That Amalia! That cannot be Amalia.*" I could not understand his

silence, his discomposure. "Aren't you going to speak to her? Oh, please do go and speak to her!" we both cried. "Do make sure if it is Amalia." But he shook his head. "I can't," he said; "I had rather not." Amalia meanwhile having finished her egg, rose deliberately, put down her napkin and walked away, followed by her little boy. . .

Things don't happen altogether at the same time; they don't quite begin or end all at once. Once more I heard of Amalia long years afterwards, when by a happy hospitable chance I met Dr. Norman MacLeod at the house of my old friends, Mr. and Mrs. Cunliffe. I was looking at him, and thinking that in some indefinable way he put me in mind of the past, when he suddenly asked me if I knew that he and my father had been together as boys at Weimar, learning German from the same professor, and both in love with the same beautiful girl. "What, Amalia! Dr. Weissenborne?" I cried. "Dear me! do you know about Amalia?" said Dr. MacLeod, "and do you know about old Weissenborne? I thought I was the only person left to remember them. We all learnt from Weissenborne, we were all in love with Amalia, every one of us, your father too! What happy days those were!" And then he went on to tell us that years and years afterwards, when they met again on the occasion of one of the lecturing tours in Scotland, he, Dr. MacLeod, and the rest of the notabilities were all assembled to receive the lecturer on the platform, and as my father came by carrying his papers and advancing to take his place at the reading desk, he recognised Dr. MacLeod as he passed, and in the face of all the audience he bent forward and said gravely, without stopping one moment on his way, "*Ich liebe Amalia doch,*" and so went on to deliver his lecture.

Dr. MacLeod also met Amalia once again in after life, and to him, too, had come a disillusion. He too had been overwhelmed and shocked by the

change of years. Poor lady! I can't help being very sorry for her, to have had two such friends and not to have kept them seems a cruel fate. To have been so charming, that her present seemed but a calumny upon the past. It is like the story of the woman who flew into a fury with her own portrait, young, smiling, and triumphant, and who destroyed it, so as not to be taunted by the past any more. Let us hope that Frau von Z. was never conscious of her loss, never looked upon this picture and on that.

Since writing all this, I have found an old letter from my father to his mother, and written from Weimar. It is dated 29th September, 1830. "There is a capital library here," he says, "which is open to me, an excellent theatre which costs a shilling a night, and a charming *petite société* which costs nothing. Goethe, the great lion of Weimar, I have not yet seen, but his daughter-in-law has promised to introduce me." Then he describes going to Court: "I have had to air my legs in black breeches and to sport a black coat, black waistcoat, and cock-hat, looking something like a cross between a footman and a Methodist parson.

"We have had three operas," he goes on; "*Medea* and the *Barber of Seville* and the *Flauto*

Magico. Hümmel conducts the orchestra [then comes a sketch of Hümmel with huge shirt collars]. The orchestra is excellent but the singers are not first-rate." . . . Amalia must have had rivals, even in those early days, for this same letter goes on to say: "I have fallen in love with the Princess of Weimar, who is unluckily married to Prince Charles of Prussia. I must get over this unfortunate passion which will otherwise, I fear, bring me to an untimely end. There are several very charming young persons of the female sex here, Miss Amalia von X., and ditto von Pappenheim are the evening belles."

"Of winter nights," says my father in the other well-known letter which is printed in Lewes's *Life of Goethe*, "we used to charter sedan chairs in which we were carried through the snow to those pleasant Court entertainments. I for my part was fortunate enough to purchase Schiller's sword, which formed a part of my Court costume and still hangs in my study,¹ and puts me in mind of days of youth the most kindly and delightful."

ANNE RITCHIE.

¹ So he wrote in 1855, but a few years after he gave the sword to a friend for whom he had a great affection, and who carried it back to America as a token of good will and sympathy. This friend was Bayard Taylor, a true knight, and worthy to carry the honourable bloodless weapon.

MARGARET STUART.¹

THE story of Margaret Stuart is one of those by-paths of history which lead nowhere in particular but are not the less attractive to the traveller on the high road. The scanty details which may be gleaned concerning her short life from the writings of her contemporaries invest her with a singular charm ; and the driest chronicler of her day cannot record her untimely death without pausing regretfully to recall the beauty and goodness of the young princess who " was tane owre soune, in flower of her fairnesse."

Never perhaps had a French monarch found himself in such doleful plight as did Charles VII. ten years after Agincourt. The son of Henry V. had been proclaimed King of France at St. Denis, as soon as his grandfather's funeral rites were over ; nor was the ceremony an empty boast. The English child was acknowledged by the Queen Mother, by the first prince of the blood, by the Parliament and the University of Paris. The Isle de France and the capital were in the hands of the Regent Bedford ; in Normandy, Picardy, Artois, Champagne, Guienne, he had undivided sway ; while the rightful sovereign of the land, disinherited by his father and disowned by his mother, held his shabby little court in a small provincial town, and went by the derisive nickname of the King of Bourges.

It was no very magnificent offer therefore that was conveyed to James I. of Scotland by the French envoys

who travelled to Perth in 1428 to ask the hand of his eldest daughter for the Dauphin Louis. The bearers of the proposal were Reginald Chartres, Archbishop of Rheims, and John Stewart of Darnley, better known in his adopted country as the Seigneur d'Aubigny. They were extremely anxious for the success of their mission, and must have been gratified by the reception they met with at the Scottish Court. James welcomed them " with great glory, reverence and honour," and notwithstanding the desperate condition of their master's affairs, acceded to their proposals. The children,—Louis was four and Margaret three—were betrothed, and the ambassadors departed, taking with them a large body of Scottish troops to reinforce the French army. Eight years later Charles sent a second embassy to claim the bride, but in the meantime another suitor had presented himself. The guardians of Henry VI., impressed with the truth of that very old and true saying,

He that would France win
Must with Scotland first begin,

were bent on breaking the league between the two countries which was popularly supposed to date from the days of Charlemagne ; and Lord Scrope was sent to Perth to outbid the envoys of the French King. Charles had promised to give James the county of Saintonge in return for the Scottish alliance. Scrope was empowered to offer him Roxburgh and Berwick, " and all the land betwixt Redcross and Tweed," if he would make his daughter Queen of England instead of Dauphine of France. In solemn and moving terms he warned Scotland that her friendship with France had never brought her anything but loss and

¹ The story of Margaret Stuart is gathered from the Chronicles of Jean Chartier and Matthieu de Coucy, from Drummond's *History of Scotland*, and from the *Life and Death of James I.*, published by the Maitland Club ; and especially from the Report of Du Tillay's Trial, which is among the *Pièces Justificatives* given in the Appendix to Duclo's *Life of Louis XI.*

misfortune ; that she was but regarded as a postern-gate through which the French hoped to enter England. "It hath been your valour and not theirs which heretofore impeached our progress in France," cried the crafty envoy. "Are not your wounds at Vernueil and Cravant still bleeding? Ye say ye cannot break your ancient league with that kingdom? Unhappy Scotland, and too too honest! As friends and neighbours we entreat you that you do not uphold the French now in the sunset of their fortunes, that ye would not shoulder this falling wall!"

The Scots listened attentively, but remained unmoved by the Englishman's eloquence. They mistrusted the enemy who approached with Berwick and Roxburgh in his hand. From flattery Scrope passed to menace, but still without effect. James was true to his word and to the national tradition, and the English King was advised to seek a wife elsewhere. The Lady Margaret set out for her new home escorted by a noble company of knights and gentlemen, and accompanied besides by a thousand Scottish men-at-arms,—a somewhat ominous dowry for the bride of eleven years. The fleet narrowly escaped the English ships of war which lay in wait off the Breton coast to intercept the Princess, but she reached La Rochelle in safety.

Margaret entered Tours on St. John's Day, 1436, and was cordially welcomed by the burgesses. The Sires de Maillé and de Gamache met her at the gates, and walked beside her palfrey till she dismounted at the castle. She was then conducted to the hall where the royal party awaited her, and the Queen came forward four or five steps and kissed her. The King was absent. At that moment the Dauphin, who till then had remained in his chamber below, entered with several knights and squires. "So soon as the lady who had come to be his wife and bride heard that he was in the hall, she went towards him and

they embraced each other. They then went all together to the Queen's chamber which was handsomely adorned and there they amused themselves till supper." The next morning the wedding ceremony was performed by the Archbishop of Rheims, the King arriving apparently only just in time to be present, for he went to church in his riding-dress. The bride and bridegroom however were "royally attired," and the spectators were particularly impressed by a velvet robe covered with gold embroidery worn by the Queen. After the wedding there was a banquet at which "every possible kind of meat was on the table." The feast was enlivened by the strains of trumpets, lutes, psalteries, and possibly, according to M. Francisque Michel, the bagpipes: heralds and pursuivants were present in great numbers; "and to tell the truth," says an eye-witness, "they made great good cheer." It was a long time since the poverty-stricken Court had enjoyed such a festivity. Two years later the marriage was consummated at Gien-sur-Loire.

Thanks to Sir Walter Scott, we all know something of Margaret's bridegroom; there is no more striking portrait than Louis XI. in the great novelist's gallery. The boy who stood at Margaret's side that June morning in the church of Tours was not yet the man, crafty, cynical, grotesquely religious, who looks at us with sinister eyes from the pages of *Quentin Durward*; but it was plain already that Louis was cast in a very different mould from his easy indolent father. At seven years old he had been "a very fair and gracious seigneur, well-formed, apt and active." At thirteen he was a precocious boy, not of a specially gracious turn, but still noticeably active. He was not seventeen when he permitted himself to be placed at the head of the conspiracy organised by the great nobles to dethrone his father. This first essay in practical politics was not successful. The discreditable scheme collapsed, and the

rebels were forced to surrender at discretion. But it indicated sufficiently clearly the bent of the prince's mind, and the existence of that amazing energy which was afterwards the salvation of France.

While Louis was engaged in these early intrigues the Dauphine's grace and goodness were winning her golden opinions from all sorts of people. The King conceived a very sincere and lasting regard for his son's young wife; the devout and gentle Queen loved her dearly. Among the other great ladies of Charles VII.'s Court,—the shrewd old Yolande of Sicily, plotting and counterplotting, the pale Queen Marie, bearing her trials with uncomplaining patience, Agnes Sorel in her jewelled robes, drinking her fill "of the pastimes and joyaunce of this world,"—Margaret moves apart, absorbed in her own pursuits, in the Court but scarcely of it. We only get an occasional glimpse of the young Princess whose learning was the admiration of her contemporaries, and who for her frank sweet nature was loved, says one who knew her, of God and men.

Wise, witty, and beautiful as Margaret was, she never found the key to her husband's heart. Louis loved no one but his mother. It was perhaps to console herself for his neglect, or for his aversion, that she turned to that world of thought and fancy in which so many lonely souls have found a refuge.

It was not remarkable that James Stuart's daughter should have literary tastes. But the feverish ardour with which she gave herself up to them was very remarkable in a woman of that century. No famished scholar in Paris lying awake at night on his wretched pallet and forgetting his hunger in the immortal words he read, was a keener and more untiring student than the Dauphine. Her nights were constantly spent in solitary study; her ladies reported that it was often daylight before she would lay aside her book or her pen. She

wrote as much perhaps as she read, but we have no opportunity of criticising any of her work. Of all her numerous verses, not a *rondel* or *ballade* survives. She probably modelled herself upon Alain Chartier, the Court poet and secretary, whose name has a place on the very brief list of the authors of the fifteenth century. Chartier's prose is now pronounced pedantic and tedious, and his poetry not much more readable than his prose; but in his day he had a great reputation, and though we no longer account him a noble poet, a second Seneca, or the father of French eloquence, he still deserves to be honourably remembered for his earnest patriotism and for his literary independence. Margaret studied his writings and listened to his talk with the natural enthusiasm of a young disciple. "One day," says Etienne Pasquier, "a memorable thing happened to him. The Dauphine passing with a great following of lords and ladies through a hall where Alain had fallen asleep, went and kissed him on the mouth." Some of the suite naively expressed their surprise that the Princess should have conferred this honour upon such an ugly man, "For to tell the truth, Nature had encased a very fine mind in a very ill-favoured body." But the Dauphine answered a little drily that, "They need not marvel at this mystery, for she had not kissed the man but the lips which had uttered so many golden words."

This incident has been connected, I think quite causelessly, with the melancholy close of Margaret's life. An act of homage so publicly paid to a man forty years older than herself was scarcely capable of misinterpretation.

The Court meanwhile was constantly moving. The King was to be found at Blois, at Bourges, at Tours, at Orleans, anywhere but Paris. There was no love lost between Charles and the Mistress City. Since the affair of the Praguerie, as the revolt of the nobles was called, the Dauphin had appeared

to be on good terms with his father. They went everywhere together, and Louis distinguished himself frequently during the Guienne campaign. In 1443 he assisted to raise the siege of Dieppe, and then went to Meaux, "And with him," according to the irate Parisians, "were some thousands of thieves who plundered all the Isle de France and gave the Dauphin a crown for every horse, and half-a-crown for every cow they took;" while the Prince spent all his time in hunting and was seldom seen at mass.

The following autumn the Court repaired to Nancy to celebrate a wedding in the royal family. The English Ministers had been a long time finding a wife for their young King, but France and England were now at last at peace, and their newly formed friendship was to be cemented by the marriage of Margaret of Anjou, the Queen's niece, and the prince who long ago had been the Scottish Margaret's suitor. Suffolk came to Nancy to act as proxy for Henry, and the wedding was celebrated with great rejoicings. In the midst of these brilliant festivities the shadows began to darken heavily round the Dauphine's path.

Jamet du Tillay was a Breton squire who had done good service both in the English war and in the Praguerie. He held the post of Bailli of Vermandois and was also one of the King's chamberlains. For two years Du Tillay had nourished some secret grudge against the Dauphine, and during the visit to Nancy he seems to have resolved to gratify it by destroying the reputation of a woman who had never yet been touched by the breath of calumny. When the Court left Nancy and went to winter at Chalons-sur-Marne, he pursued her with relentless and almost incomprehensible pertinacity. Anonymous letters were sent to the King, inuendoes were dropped ingeniously about the Court; in a hundred ways it was hinted that it was not harmlessly of ballades and rondeaux that the Prin-

cess sat dreaming far into the night, and that it would have been well for the country and its future King if the foreign girl had never crossed the seas.

The French Court was a soil in which seed like this was apt to take quick root; but Margaret, in the eyes of those who knew her, was above suspicion. The King did not trouble himself about the matter, trusting in his indolent way that the other people concerned would do the same. But that was naturally an idle hope. Margaret was well aware that an enemy was assailing her in the dark with the deadly weapon of secret slander, and from the beginning she never doubted the success of his industrious malignity. Before they left Nancy, she spoke of it to one of her ladies with mournful prescience. "I know," she said, "there is one who speaks lightly of me, and him I have good reason to hate; for day by day he is labouring to bring upon me the ill-will of my lord; and much evil has come upon me through him already, and there is yet more to come." She stood in great fear of her husband, the cold, inscrutable prince whose brain was always busy with subtle and dangerous thoughts, and who passed already at twenty-one for the most suspicious man in the world. Louis had never loved her; she had been married eight years and had borne him no children. It was not difficult to conjecture what the end might be; and the proud and sensitive woman looked for it with intolerable dread.

The winter of 1444 was a very gay and busy season in Chalons. The royal households were lodged in the castle of Sarri, a league from the town which was thronged with princes and nobles. The Constable was busy with his long-cherished schemes of military reform. The imprisoned Count of Armagnac was clamouring through his Chancellor for trial or release. The Duchess of Burgundy came with a splendid retinue to meet the King of Sicily and end the long quarrel between

the houses of Burgundy and Anjou. Envoys and deputations from different provinces were continually coming and going; there were banquets and pageants and tourneys in the market-place, where knights and squires "in very noble array" endeavoured to outshine each other in chivalrous accomplishments and in splendour of dress and equipment. In these brilliant scenes the Dauphine took her part, outwardly serene and fearless, but sick at heart with apprehension and despair. Whenever she spoke of her enemy, it was with a sort of disdainful irony that justified the French once more in their saying "proud as a Scot."

"What was that brave Jamet saying to you?" she asked one of her ladies. "He was telling fibs and talking nonsense as he does with everyone," was the reply. "True," answered Margaret calmly, "that is his usual way."

A fortnight later Jamet hearing, he said, that the Princess was displeased with him begged through one of her maids of honour for an audience, in order that he might excuse himself for anything he had done amiss. The Dauphine refused to receive him. "I have more reason to hate that man than any in the world," said she; "but there is no need for him to excuse himself. What are his excuses to me?"

So the winter passed and the summer came round again; and one warm day in August the Princess went on foot to perform her devotions at the shrine of Our Lady of the Thorn, and came home hot and tired and was taken suddenly ill. The physicians pronounced the sickness to be pleurisy, and declared the patient would recover if she had not some trouble on her mind which baffled their skill and rendered their remedies useless. Her strenuous studies had impaired her health, beginning no doubt the work Du Tillay's venomous tongue completed.

She was only ill a week. Four days before her death she was lying silently

upon her little couch, and presently was heard to say to herself, "Ah, Jamet, you have carried out your purpose. I die through you." And with that she raised her hand and called Heaven passionately to witness that she had never been other than absolutely faithful to her husband, that she had never wronged him by a single thought.

On the following Monday about the hour of vespers it was plain that she was dying. Robert Poitevin her confessor and some of her ladies were gathered round her bed when Marguerite de Salignac entered hastily and said to the priest in a low tone, "You must persuade Madame to pardon Jamet."

"She has done so already," he replied; "she has pardoned every one."

But the Dauphine overheard this consolatory assurance. "I have not," said she.

"Saving your grace, Madame," returned the confessor, "you have. It was your duty to pardon all who may have wronged you, and you have done it."

"I have not," repeated Margaret emphatically. A third time the priest repeated his assertion, and a third time Margaret denied it.

Her attendants looked at each other dismayed by the dying girl's terrible sincerity. A soul so deeply stirred by human passion was in no fit state to depart. But presently Madame de St. Michel, the oldest and most trusted of her ladies, took courage and reminded her young mistress of that divine forgiveness which we all desire, and which is only granted to those who from their hearts forgive. There was a pause, and at last Margaret answered faintly, "I forgive him, and from my heart." But the anxious listeners observed that she never uttered the name of the enemy it was so hard to pardon. Presently the Dauphine murmured wearily that if it were not contrary to her marriage vow, she would be sorry she ever came of her own free will to

France. And with one yet more piteous sentence, "Fi de la vie, ne m'en parle plus," upon her lips, she passed away. She had not completed her twenty-first year.

As we read of the long pent up bitterness revealed in this strange scene, we are reminded of another of Margaret's race, that James V. of whom it is recorded that, among many royal qualities, "He had this strange humour, he did not know how to forgive."

Margaret was buried in the cathedral of Chalons with fitting solemnity and amid general lamentation. Many years afterwards when Louis had come to the throne, he removed her remains to Tours and laid them in a chapel which she herself had founded. The circumstances of her death caused great excitement in Chalons, and the indignation against Du Tillay rose so high that an inquiry was held into his conduct. In the following year the whole story was raked up again, it seems at the Dauphin's special request, and on this occasion the Queen herself gave evidence. Nothing came of the trial. Du Tillay was loud in his protestations of innocence. He vowed that he had

never seen anything in Madame Marguerite unworthy of a good and honourable lady; nor had he, so far as he could remember, ever spoken an injurious word of her. On the contrary, it was he who had been slandered, and he was ready to maintain his assertion with his sword in the King's presence. The master of the Dauphine's household and Louis de Laval were eager to accept the challenge, but the King forbade the duel. By dint of much hard swearing Du Tillay appears to have convinced his judges that he had done no intentional wrong; and we hear of him five years after taking an active part in the war in Normandy.

Later on a still darker story was whispered about the Court. It was hinted that the Dauphin had grown very weary of his childless wife and had found means to relieve himself of her. Louis was no doubt grateful in his own way to Providence for the convenient dispensation which released him from an irksome bond; but I cannot find any proof that he was directly responsible for the Dauphine's death.

H. C. MACDOWALL.

VASSILI.

ONE autumn, never mind how many years ago, I, Basil Ogilvy, then junior attaché to the British Embassy at St. Petersburg, was spending a week or two at the house of a cousin of mine who was married to a Russian general.

The Zagarines lived in a large provincial town, and as they were sociable people and entertained a good deal, I made acquaintance at their house with the best society of K——; the officials civil and military, their wives and daughters, and the country gentlemen who stayed at the principal hotel and gambled from morning to night till the lightness of their purses obliged them to return to their own houses. The most conspicuous personage among the latter class, the leader of the *jeunesse dorée*, was a certain Prince Serge Erisoff.

Being a lieutenant in the Chevalier Guard, the Prince generally adorned the brighter sphere of the capital and was only spending his leave at K—— near which his property was situated. He was a big, dark, broad-shouldered man, of seven or eight and twenty, handsome rather than otherwise, with a ruddy complexion, hard restless black eyes, and waxed black moustaches twisted up to his prominent cheek-bones. His manner had little of the polished courtesy peculiar to Russians of the best class, and his every look and word betrayed an irrepressible arrogance; but in spite of this he was generally popular, and much admired by women. My own feelings towards him were of a friendly nature, for it so happened that he went out of his way to be civil to me, and, in spite of his arrogance I found him a pleasant companion. Thus, when he pressed me to spend a few days at his country house so soon as my visit

to the Zagarines should be over, I readily accepted his invitation.

"My place," he said, "is a wretched old barrack, at which I don't spend half a dozen weeks in the year; but if you can put up with a bachelor *ménage*, I can promise you a wolf-hunt and some fair shooting."

It was late on an October afternoon that I reached Paulovsk, as Erisoff's domain was called. A thick drizzle was falling, and the rain dripped from every eave and cornice of the old seigneurial dwelling. A barrack it certainly was not, nor even an ordinary white-washed Russian country house, but a mansion built in the finest rococo style by an ambitious Erisoff of the eighteenth century. The stucco on its *façade* was discoloured by the damp of years, thistles and wild oats grew undisturbed round the steps, the out-buildings seemed falling into decay, and the whole place had a neglected, deserted appearance. The interior of the house exactly corresponded with its exterior. The large lofty reception rooms, over the ceilings of which sprawled gods, goddesses and cupids, damp-stained and scarred by ugly cracks, were furnished with a faded magnificence of pale brocades and tarnished mirrors. Only the Prince's smoking-room wore a comparatively modern air.

In any case the old house would have interested me. As it was I had heard queer stories about it and my host's grandfather, the man who built it; for of Serge Stephanovitch Erisoff, his boundless profligacy and pitiless cruelty, ghastly legends still survived, and about the house which had been made notorious by his crimes lingered the ghost of its old evil reputation.

On the night I arrived we were

a party of ten at dinner. Among the servants who waited on us was an old man whose appearance attracted my attention, partly because of the contrast it presented to that of his fellow servants. He must have been at least seventy-five, and his tall lean figure was bent with his years; his thin aquiline features were the reverse of Muscovite, nor less so were his large piercing black eyes. Once, chancing to meet mine, these eyes flashed at me from under their shaggy brows a wild stare that almost startled me. After this I often found myself watching him, and as he waited (and he waited deftly) it seemed to me that though he rendered like one accustomed to it the service required of him, he yet did so under silent protest and against his will.

The next day we were out shooting till late in the afternoon, and made a good bag of wild duck, but towards evening the rain came down in torrents and we got home wet to the skin. The Prince, who had shot badly, was in a vile temper, and since he could not vent his wrath on us at dinner the servants suffered for it. Vassili in particular (the old servant whose looks had interested me), he rated like a dog. The old man listened with bent head, meekly enough, but on one occasion looking up suddenly, I saw his face reflected in a mirror on the wall opposite, a face so distorted with hate, that I involuntarily started, sending a fork at my elbow clattering on to the floor. Instantly Vassili was on his knees groping for it. As he replaced it his glance met mine, and at the same moment a shiver passed over me from head to foot, accompanied by a curious feeling which I hardly know how to describe, a feeling akin to fear. Puzzled and annoyed at this inexplicable sensation I went on with my dinner in silence.

We were none of us very talkative that evening till the champagne had loosened our tongues, and our host, under the same benign influence, had partially recovered his good humour.

"Have you observed poor Serge Feodorovitch?" said my left-hand neighbour, M. Boris Volutine, the eldest and soberest of our party. "He is a charming fellow, the best of fellows; but what an infernal temper he rejoices in! It is a possession that he inherits from both father and grandfather."

"Did you know Prince Feodor?" I asked.

"No. He died while his son was a child. He married a pretty French widow, the Comtesse de Leiris, who also, I believe, had a temper. She lives in Paris, regarding our poor Russia as a barbarous country unfit for human habitation."

"The Prince, I know, is an only son," I said presently. "Did his grandfather leave many children?"

"Serge Stephanovitch was twice married; first to a lady who bore him several children, all of whom died young, and again late in life to the mother of Prince Feodor, who died at her son's birth. Serge Stephanovitch was rather a celebrated character, as perhaps you know."

"If report speaks true he was a monster," I answered hastily.

Volutine raised his eyebrows slightly. "It is rash to believe all one hears, Monsieur. Serge Stephanovitch was, I imagine, like the rest of us, the result of heredity and circumstance. He lived much abroad, and with him the gallantry of a Frenchman was grafted on the patriarchal disposition of a Russian *grand seigneur*. Allowing for the difference of period and training our young friend, Serge Feodorovitch, is, I fancy, not unlike his departed grandfather."

I looked across at Erisoff. Yes, I could easily imagine him twenty years older, his hard, handsome face worn and lined by dissipation; a bad man, free to gratify every half insane caprice, and ruling despotically over thousands of souls. Such must have been Serge Stephanovitch.

Although it was nearly noon when I went down stairs next day into the

dining-room, neither my host nor my fellow guests had as yet put in an appearance; and I walked to the end of the room where hung a portrait I had noticed the evening before, and wished to inspect more closely. It was a fairly well painted portrait of an extremely handsome woman, wearing a white, scanty imitation of the Greek costume. Her features were aquiline and perfectly regular, she had bright red lips and unnaturally large dark eyes; a red gauze scarf hung from her shoulders, and leaning one shapely bare arm on a marble balustrade, she held a rose between her taper fingers. It would have been a conventional portrait from the Book of Beauty, but for the strange, wild, almost fierce expression of the woman's black eyes. Where else had I seen eyes of which these reminded me?

Becoming aware just then that some one was standing behind me, I turned and saw old Vassili, who, bowing low, expressed a hope that I had slept well. I had been learning Russian for the last three years and could speak it with tolerable fluency. I answered that I had slept admirably, and asked whether he could tell me who the portrait above us represented.

"Certainly I can tell your Excellency," said the old man with a faint smile. "That is the Signora Maria Fiordilisa, and she was once a great singer; she lived here many years ago, in the lifetime of the blessed Serge Stephanovitch,—may his soul have peace!"

Was it my fancy, or was there a touch of repressed irony in the old man's low soft voice? As this thought passed through my mind the door of the dining-room opened and Erisoff came in.

"What!" he said with a laugh, when he had growled out some order to Vassili, who left the room to obey it. "What! Has the old fellow been showing you his mother's portrait?"

"His mother?" I repeated, half incredulously, but it struck me at that moment to whose fierce wild

eyes those of the Signora Maria bore a strange resemblance.

The Prince laughed again. "He did not tell you then? I thought he might have. He is a queer old fellow and more than half mad, though quite harmless; the peasants and the other servants say that he is a sorcerer, and has the evil eye, and I believe the same thing was said of the beautiful Maria, because she was the only woman who ever kept her hold over my grandfather. By the way, have you ever seen his portrait? No? Come this way then."

And putting his arm through mine he led me up some steps into a little ante-chamber. It contained but one picture, and the light from the uncurtained window fell full on the half-length figure of a young man with powdered hair, wearing a gold laced uniform.

"They say I am like him," remarked Prince Serge.

There was a certain likeness between Serge Stephanovitch and his descendant, but the former was by far the handsomer man of the two; his features were straighter, less Russian in type, and much more finely cut; he had a delicately clear complexion, and long womanish grey eyes. Something in the expression of those eyes, the straight lines, faintly defined as yet, between his delicate nostrils and the corners of his mouth, were the only outward indications of his cruel and voluptuous nature; and still one felt that, to that beautiful face, man, woman, and child, must have appealed for pity in vain.

Erisoff stood with folded arms under his grandfather's portrait. "Do you see the likeness?" he inquired smiling.

"Yes, I see it. Your grandfather must have been a good-looking fellow."

"The handsomest man of his day, *mon cher*," said the Prince complacently. "And now let us go to breakfast."

The rain having completely passed and the sky cleared, when breakfast

was over I expressed a wish for some fresh air ; but my companions all exclaimed at the idea of leaving the house, and had settled cheerfully down for an afternoon at *écarté*. "If," said my host, "you would care for a solitary ride,—the roads are not fit for driving—a horse and a man,—you will want a guide,—are of course at your disposal."

This offer I eagerly accepted, and coming out into the court half an hour later I found the horses waiting, led up and down, as I saw to my surprise, by Vassili, who, after I had mounted, swung into his saddle with more activity than I should have expected from so old a man. We were soon riding rapidly away from Paulovsk, side by side, as I meant to have the benefit of Vassili's society. He had asked in which direction I wished to ride, and I had answered that I left the choice to him. Little by little we entered into conversation, and though at first, as he answered my questions, the old man shot at me now and then a swift suspicious glance, after a time he gained enough confidence and assurance to volunteer remarks of his own. Struck by the wretched appearance of some hovels by the roadside, I inquired whether the Prince's estate was well looked after in his absence.

"The steward," Vassili replied, "looks well after his own interests. His Excellency only comes here for a few weeks in the year, and then he cares for nothing but the chase." Then, answering all my questions with apparent frankness, he gave me information which made me exclaim in amazement: "But why do you not tell the Prince how shamefully he is deceived and robbed?"

The old man looked at me with that faint smile of his, which seemed less the expression of a present, than the ghost of a dead and gone mirth. "Neither his Excellency's affairs nor those of the village are any concern of mine. Serge Feodorovitch would curse me for a crazy old meddler,

and the steward (a good fellow) would become my bitter enemy."

For a little while I meditated in silence. Trees in plenty grew round the old house at Paulovsk, but we had left them far behind us, and on either side of the road (a road little better than a track) lay a limitless monotonous stretch of grey moorland, broken only by scattered clumps of birches and the thatched roofs of a distant village. I thought it was the bare flat landscape which oppressed me with a feeling of melancholy. "Vassili," I said, rousing myself, "have you lived at Paulovsk all your life?"

"Yes, your Excellency," he answered after a moment's pause, "there I have spent my whole long life. There I was born and played at my mother's knees; there I wooed and won my little Sacha,—and there I lost her." He spoke the last words in a tone of intense sadness.

"She died young?" I said gently.

"She died, but first I lost her. Lost her? She was never mine. Listen, and I will tell you the story of my life. My mother, as you know, was an Italian singer. She sang at a beautiful theatre at a beautiful place called Napoli, where she lived in peace till, in an evil day, she left it with Serge Stephanovitch. He brought her back with him to Paulovsk,—she would have followed him to Siberia. She was a good mother, and because she loved me I was an abomination and a plague-spot in the eyes of Serge Stephanovitch. True, I was his son, and as a father he chastised me, knowing that he could make her suffer most through me. So it went on till I was a boy of ten; then, one day he told her that she was growing old and ugly, and might go if she liked. That night she cut her throat,—it would have been better had she cut his as well."

His low monotonous voice betrayed not the smallest emotion. The Prince had called him half mad; I wondered whether he was so in reality.

"After that," he continued, "Serge

Stephanovitch hated me more than ever, for I reminded him of the dead ; therefore I, the son of the master, was sent to work in the fields and treated like a serf. But he soon left Paulovsk, and when he returned I had grown into a man and was betrothed to Sacha, the daughter of Ivan Dimitrief. He gave his consent to our marriage. He made me fine promises, lying with smiling lips, for my little Sacha, who was but fifteen, had found favour in his eyes. He sent for her three days before our wedding-day, and she came to the house unsuspecting ; in the evening two days later he set her free. It was the evening before our wedding-day. All night she raved and moaned while I knelt beside her, and at dawn she died."

I uttered an exclamation of horror, which Vassili did not seem to hear, and then we were both silent. The vague melancholy which I had felt before, deepened and intensified by the old man's ghastly story, weighed on me like a nightmare, and it was a relief when a prosaic incident turned the current of my thoughts.

As we were approaching the village I have mentioned, Vassili noticed that his horse had gone lame, and on dismounting to see what was the matter, he found that it had lost a shoe. The blacksmith's *izba*, Vassili said, was the first we should come to ; would I be so gracious as to wait there for a few minutes until the loss was remedied ? The blacksmith, as fate would have it, was drinking at the village tavern and his wife had to go and fetch him. I was not disposed to sit waiting in the stuffy *izba*, and I proposed to Vassili that we should walk up and down outside.

We walked away from the village in the direction of a little clump of birch trees, and soon I broke the silence by a question which I had been pondering over for some minutes past : " Since you were free, and no serf of Prince Serge's, why did you not leave Paulovsk ? "

For a moment he did not answer ;

his keen eyes were fixed on the distant misty horizon. " After she died, I was mad," he said slowly. " When I came to myself I knew that I should be avenged some day, and for that day I waited. It was long, very long in coming, and sometimes I grew impatient and longed to kill him, but the time passed and still I waited ; he had grown very old, and my hair was white already before the blow fell. Serge Stephanovitch loved his son Feodor as much as it was in his power to love. One evening the young man arrived unexpectedly at Paulovsk, and though he had been travelling all day and had scarcely stopped to take food, the supper grew cold on the master's table and the door of his room remained shut. Inside we heard murmuring voices, and at last, suddenly, the voice of Serge Stephanovitch rising almost to a scream ; then the door opened and his son came out. Pale as death he passed through the room, and I never saw him again. Fresh horses were put into his carriage and galloped off with him into the night. The beat of their hoofs died away on the road, and still Serge Stephanovitch let his supper grow cold. Prince Feodor had shut the door after him, but Timoféi Alexeief, having spoken and received no answer, opened it trembling with fear. He had no need to tremble ; his master lay senseless on the floor. For months Serge Stephanovitch could not move hand or foot, nor utter anything save sounds that no one could understand ; but there was strength in him yet, and little by little clearness of speech returned to him, though his body from the waist down was paralysed and he lay as helpless as a log. Then began for him what was not a happy time. His restless spirit chafed and fretted like a devil in chains ; he who had never been content to rest like other men was more weak and powerless than a child. In the house, in the village, on the estate, his will was no longer law. Before his face his dependents were humble

enough, but he knew that behind his back they laughed at his orders and mocked at his helplessness. As for his son, he did not return; and the neighbours shunned the house. All through his illness I tended him; the others, men and women, were alike stupid and clumsy, and grew frightened when he swore at them and tried to strike them, whereas I watched over him with patient fidelity, and bore with him as a good son should. At night he could not sleep, and was troubled by strange fancies. Every night men and women he had once known, and who had gone before him to the grave, stood at the foot of his bed. Sometimes they cursed him, sometimes they mocked; but she who stood there oftenest,—a pale and slender girl—neither mocked nor cursed, but only looked at him silently with wide open terrible eyes; yet she it was whom he most dreaded, whom he vainly implored with groans and tears to leave him to die in peace. For all my care and patient service he paid me with hatred, and also, even in the day-time, with a hidden, unspoken, unacknowledged fear. Had he any cause to fear me? Not for a million roubles would I have deprived him of one moment of his miserable death in life; the torments of hell we can only guess at, but I was quite sure of his. His end was very sudden. One day a letter came which told him that his son was dead. Once again the hand of God struck him, and though he breathed till morning his spirit had already fled."

"A hidden, unspoken, unacknowledged fear;" those words had made a deep impression on me, for they exactly described my own involuntary, unreasoning feeling towards the man at my side,—a feeling compared with which my pity for his wrongs and sufferings had proved but slight and transitory. "Let us go back," I said abruptly, "we have come a long way." Daylight was fading fast as we reached the clump of birches and the village lay behind it out of sight.

Vassili either did not hear what I said or pretended not to hear. Filled with a vague uneasiness I eyed the darkening landscape and the lowering sky; lines of white mist were clinging to the low ridges of the moorland and rising slowly from its marshy pools, and it seemed to me that as they gathered substance they changed into floating figures beckoning with shadowy arms. "You can stay here if you like," I said; "I am going back."

The old man laid a detaining hand upon my arm. "Stop," he said, "don't you see how the fog is thickening? We must wait now till the moon rises."

His voice had grown strong and imperious; it was he who commanded now. In silence I yielded and stood beside him, staring at the ground. I remember I stirred it with my heel and watched the water ooze up from under my boot,—then I raised my eyes. Great Heaven! We were not alone!

Gathering round us, hemming us in on either side, surged a vast crowd of shadowy, shifting forms; sometimes pressing so close that I could plainly distinguish their faces, and sometimes receding into vague uncertainty again. A cold sweat broke out on me, and my brain reeled. "Courage!" said the voice of Vassili close beside me, and suddenly all terror and excitement left me, and in their place came a great awe as in the presence of death. And I looked and saw that there were men and women and children in the crowd, and all their faces, whether old or young, were rigid with the same despairing woe, and all their eyes were wide open and terrible in a fixed imploring stare. How closely they pressed round us, and how silently! A thronging multitude, and yet this deathless stillness,—not a rustle, not a footstep, not a breath.

"Who are they?" I asked my companion.

He stretched out his hands towards them. "Look at them and see. These are they who in the long centuries of

the past dragged out their miserable lives and died by cruel deaths; the bodies of some have crumbled long ago to dust, and the hearts of others have but just ceased to beat. See, from all parts of the Empire they have come, from Holy Russia, from Poland and Lithuania, from the steppes of the Ukraine, from the mines and forests of Siberia. These are the oppressed of an accursed country and an accursed race. These were given over, tied and bound, to the mercy of their fellow men. These are the countless unknown victims to whom the sunlight became a mockery and all hope a lie, who cried to God for vengeance and God avenged them not. Some passed in chains along our roads and streets, the endless procession that ever passes to the land of living death; some yielded their last breath beneath the knout; some languished and went mad in prison-cells; some crawled away maimed to die in holes and caves of the earth; some surrendered willingly all that makes the world sweet, spending themselves on a forlorn hope, giving their lives for a hopeless cause; others, yet more miserable, perished like the beasts, walled in by ignorance, not knowing why they lived or died; and all, all are forgotten! But when the books are opened and the long list is read, surely there will be found recorded not only the nameless tortures, the life-long captivities, the lingering deaths, but also the illusions destroyed, hopes deceived, minds for ever embittered, warped natures, broken hearts. Surely the heart's blood of these, though they be not all saints or martyrs, crieth from the ground, *How long, O Lord, holy and just and true, how long?*"

His voice died away, and even as it ceased there rose a low wail from the very ground under our feet. It rose higher and higher, it swelled louder and louder, till it grew into a great cry. And then all those death-like faces were raised to heaven, and the cry became a mighty shout for vengeance, shaking the earth and rending the sky, and with that shout ringing

in my ears I sank into the blackness of night.

When I returned to consciousness I was lying on the floor of the blacksmith's *izba*, with some one bending over me and holding a glass to my lips; it was a woman, and the light from the forge played on her face and dress. Not quite certain if I was in the land of the living yet, I mechanically gulped down the proffered draught, horribly as it scorched my throat. The painful sensation revived me a little, and I realised that Vassili was kneeling beside me, supporting my head with one arm.

A mad rage took possession of me. "I suppose you want to poison me," I cried in English, "not content with beguiling me out there and half killing me. But you shall repent this. Do you hear, you old villain!"

"Poor Barine!" said the woman, pityingly. "He raves!"

"You hear her!" I cried, clutching his arm. "Tell her that she lies; tell her how the dead rise from their graves at your bidding, and stare and stare. . . ." I sank back exhausted into the old man's arms.

Of what took place afterwards I have only a confused and uncertain recollection. This much I know; they pressed more *vodka* on me and I refused it. Before I remounted my horse I made Vassili swear by all his saints that he would guide me not back to Paulovsk, but to the Zagarines' house at K——.

I cannot tell how long that ride lasted. At first, as I saw the dim moonlight irradiating the endless misty plain, it seemed to me that we should ride on for ever. Then an intense drowsiness stole over me, so that I had enough to do to keep from reeling in the saddle. There is a blank in my recollections after that, and I can only dimly remember the amazed face of the Zagarines' *dvornik* as I staggered into the house, and the startled voice of my cousin from the landing asking who had arrived.

I awoke from a heavy sleep late the next day, almost as weak as if I had been recovering from an illness, but not in a high fever, as my cousin had feared might be the case. She told me that Vassili had followed me into the house, and had insisted on her giving him a note for his master, explaining that I had been taken ill while out riding, and had ordered him to conduct me back to K——.

Neither Mme. Zagarine nor the Prince heard any other explanation than this one, though I wrote to the latter and duly apologised for my unceremonious behaviour. I started for St. Petersburg directly I felt strong enough to travel. During the winter which followed I often met Erisoff in society, and never without remembering old Vassili, though I avoided as much as possible all allusion to my interrupted visit to Paulovsk. Early in the spring I left Russia.

One afternoon four or five years later I was at a large reception at a senator's house in Washington, when St. Leger, one of our secretaries, came up and touched me on the shoulder.

"Well, what is it?" I asked.

"Sorry to interrupt," he answered, "but there's an old Russian here who says he knows you. His name is Volutine, and he thinks you may remember him."

I replied that I remembered him perfectly, and at once sought out my old acquaintance, who, grown a shade greyer and stouter than of yore, held out his hand with his usual pleasant smile, and professed himself delighted at our unexpected meeting. I returned the compliment, and retiring into a window-recess we talked of mutual friends, chiefly people belonging to K—— or its neighbourhood, for I had not seen him since that memorable afternoon when I rode away from Paulovsk.

"How is Erisoff?" I asked presently.

"Ah! That was what I was meaning to tell you. Le beau Serge married four years ago a Mademoiselle Vera Luvoff, whose father, General Luvoff,

you must often have seen at Court. It was a love-match, and never was a young man more strikingly improved by matrimony. You think as a rule it has a deteriorating effect? Then Serge Feodorovitch is an exception. His wife is charming, pretty, amiable, and clever, and adores her big Prince absurdly. Paulovsk, where she spends every summer, has been painted and partly refurnished, and the Princess has an English garden. While the house was being done up, by the way, the left wing caught fire one night, quite unaccountably, and long before the engine could arrive from K—— it was burnt to the ground. The rooms were all dismantled, so it was no great matter, and happily the flames were prevented from spreading to the rest of the building. Old Serge, Erisoff's grandfather, used the ground floor of the left wing as a prison, where he confined his refractory serfs, and such old wives' tales were told about sights and strange noises which haunted it, that no one would have entered it after nightfall for any sum of money; yet it was at night and on the ground floor that the fire originated. Talking of Serge Stephanovitch, a most curious thing happened. His portrait, which hung, as you may remember, in the ante-room, disappeared on the night of the fire and has never been recovered. No one knows who did it, but some hand cut it clean out of the frame; it was as if the Prince, made restless by the destruction of his property, had stepped down and walked away into the night."

"There was a queer-looking old man whom I remember," I said, when I had expressed my surprise at the mysterious disappearance of the portrait; "Vassili I think his name was; do you know if he is still alive?"

Volutine looked at me with unusual sharpness and curiosity in the glance of his little pale eyes. "What was the nature of the sudden illness which took you back to K——?" he asked smiling.

"My illness!" I exclaimed, taken aback.

"Perhaps," said Volutine, "you think me unduly inquisitive; probably you will think me still more impertinent if I ask you whether you believe in the black art?"

"Well," I answered, recovering myself, "I should like to know what makes you ask that last question?"

"The reason is very simple. When you left Paulovsk and started for your ride you appeared to be in perfect health, and yet I knew from others besides Marie Zagarine that your illness was not a pretence and an excuse; every servant and peasant at Paulovsk was persuaded that Vassili had 'overlooked' you. To this day Erisoff does not know that he persuaded Filoféi to let him take his place as your groom. Filoféi brought the note from Marie Zagarine and described in my presence the sudden fainting-fit which came upon you while you were waiting at the blacksmith's. I only heard the truth as one always hears it, late in the day."

"The truth?" I said hastily. "Only old Vassili could have told you that; as for me, I know no more of it than you do."

"And Vassili Sergeief will keep his own counsel, for he died on the night of the fire. Old as he was he worked like a man in helping to extinguish the flames; later on they missed him, and at dawn found him lying dead, struck down by some falling stone-work."

My loquacious companion talked on, but his soft voice seemed to recede into the distance; and though as I stood looking out of the window, my eyes rested on the sunshiny Washington street, I was standing in reality with a very different companion on a desolate darkening moorland, and strange figures were thronging round us with wan faces of despair. What was

the truth? At the bidding of what strange power had the evening mist taken shape before my eyes with the forms and faces of the dead? Only one man could have answered that question, and he had passed beyond questioning. I thought of him lying dead in the grey dawn, and wondered whether the faint mysterious smile that I remembered had been on his lips when death sealed them. The sound of a familiar name roused me from my reverie.

"Sacha, did you say?" I asked.

"Yes," answered Volutine, "he is their eldest child; they have now a boy as well. Sacha is a sweet little grey-eyed girl, the image of the Princess. Do you remember the room at the end of the great corridor? It was old Serge's room, and he died there. Now it is used as the children's play-room. If I had been the Princess I should have chosen some other apartment, but she says that it is light and airy, and that the ghost of Serge Stephanovitch has never been seen by any one."

So the weed-grown gardens are bright again with flowers, and where the old Prince raved and cursed, little Sacha laughs and chatters, little dreaming of another Sacha whose pale face came there long ago to haunt a dying man. Can Vassili see her I wonder, this little namesake of his dead bride, or has he forgotten the things that were, the old wrong and the old hatred, and is he wandering hand in hand with his own Sacha in some dim and happy land?

I cannot tell, but at least, as he said in mockery of his dead father, I can say most honestly and heartily of him, "May his soul have peace."

SIDNEY PICKERING.

SOME LEGENDS OF THE VAUDOIS,

MOUNTAINOUS countries have at all times been the peculiar home of superstitions and legends, and in their wild and secluded recesses the old beliefs in unearthly agencies have lingered longer as they have been less liable to disturbing influences from without. The Alps are no exception to the rule. In Switzerland, even within living memory, every mountain group was peopled in the imagination of its inhabitants with supernatural denizens, demons, gnomes, sprites, and fairies, and every valley had its own local repertory of fantastic myths and stories. The rapid spread of education, new roads and means of communication, above all the invasion of the steam-engine and the tourist have done much to destroy with the simplicity no little of the poetry and picturesqueness of the mountaineer's life. With the good old *patois* and the quaint costumes has vanished likewise much of the time-honoured folk-lore of former days. Whether for the greater happiness and contentment of the present generation, who shall say? Material progress and culture, whatever else it may achieve, has at least the great *démerit* of crusting over the distinctive characteristics and manners of separate communities with a veneer of dull, prosaic uniformity, and of destroying half the romance and charm of travel by their obliteration of those immemorial customs and traditions, which are not only of priceless interest to the antiquary and the student, but tend to stir the languid curiosity of even the most careless idler.

There is probably no part of Switzerland so familiar to Englishmen as that portion of the Pays de Vaud which skirts the northern shore of Lake Lemman; and there is certainly

none to which the above reflections are more applicable than to the rich and smiling valleys which lie behind Montreux, Vevay, and Lausanne. The most representative canton of *la Suisse Romande* is rapidly losing all traces of national individuality. The full rich Vaudois dialect has nearly died out except in remote districts, or only exists as a debased *patois*. To speak Parisian French is the aim and pride of the more educated and prosperous classes, and even the peasantry have learned to be ashamed of their native tongue, and at the same time to regard with sceptical incredulity many a belief which had been accepted without a question by their forefathers. No more in countless *chalets* on the long winter evenings do the marvellous legends, which once invested every mountain and cavern, forest and stream with a tinge of fantasy, supply to eager and awestruck listeners a theme of perpetual interest and delight. To the stranger within its gates, the modern Vaudois presents himself as, perhaps upon the whole, the most colourless and matter-of-fact of the Swiss types. Yet he possesses beneath a hard and somewhat commonplace exterior a subtle vein of poesy and imagination. The labours of M. Cérésolle and other native writers¹ have preserved to us a store of folklore not wanting in variety, originality, and fertility of conception, and those who may lack leisure or opportunity to read for themselves the legends told by the graceful pen of the Vevay pastor, may care to catch a passing glimpse in the following pages of that spirit-world which has been so uncere-

¹ *Légends des Alpes Vaudoises*, par Alfred Cérésolle, Lausanne, 1885; see also the works of Eugène Rambert and of Juste and Urbain Olivier.

moniously driven from its ancient haunts in the Canton of Vaud by the combined assault of the schoolmaster and the tourist.

In Romance Switzerland, as in all parts of Christendom during the Middle Ages, the belief in the constant and active interference of the Spirit of Evil exercised a powerful sway over the minds of men. The dualism of the old creeds and mythologies did not die with the conversion of the heathen to the Christian faith. To Satan, the Prince of Darkness and the Enemy of God, were transferred the traditional attributes of Ahriman, Typhon, Wodan, or Irmensul. All the evils and mischances of life were attributed to his malicious handiwork ; all that was strange, terrible, or inexplicable, had its source and origin in diabolic agency. The fact that in the Vaudois dialect there are no less than thirteen different names for the devil gives us some idea of the many aspects under which he was regarded, and the many parts which he was supposed to play.

One of the most peculiar and remarkable of these names is that of Vaudai, probably identical with that of the Teutonic deity Wodan, the god of hunting and combat, and instructor in the magic arts. The following curious legend shows us how easily the transition was effected.

Vaudai (or Wodan) some fifteen hundred years ago, finding himself threatened in his power and prestige by the triumphs of the Christian missionaries, and being obliged to retire step by step before the advance of the new faith, ended by withdrawing as his last refuge to the high Alps. Here (transformed now from the Pagan Wodan to the *diablo* of Christianity) he especially chose for himself the precipitous and inaccessible crags of the mountain, which from his name was henceforth called the Diablerets, and there in fierce and vindictive dudgeon set up his infernal court. But one day, says the tradition, Vaudai, finding himself in danger

of being entirely driven out from the valley where he had so long reigned supreme, determined to make a final effort to recover his lost ascendancy, or at least to wreak his vengeance on those who had forsaken him. After long brooding in gloomy reverie from the summit of his desolate abode with his sullen eyes fixed upon the plain below, he summoned to his side the most daring of his demon host and bade them follow him. Clad in all the sombre majesty of Hell, his right hand grasping his flaming sword and his left holding aloft the globe of sovereignty, he swept down like a vulture from his airy perch to the banks of the Rhone, and seating himself upon a mighty wave as on a throne, amid the rush of storm and wind, the lightning quivering round his head, he hurried down the stream, seeking to drown his hated foes beneath its swelling waters. Loud above the crash and howling of the tempest his voice was heard, echoing from crag and precipice, "*Rigou, hai ousson* (river, uplift thyself)"; and the river, lashed into savage tumult at the sound, boiled and foamed, and rolling wave upon wave, flooded its banks and swept all before it in its fury. The grisly king was filled with joy. He thought his hour of triumph was at hand. Already, as he rode upon the flood towards the defile of St. Maurice, he gloated over the prospect of the destruction that was so soon to overwhelm the principal seat of Christianity in the valley. When lo ! as if pressed back by some invisible hand, the rushing waves were stayed, and quietly subsided within their banks. Orders and threats availed not, and Satan was impotent before the Cross of Christ. St. Maurice, with its church and the memories of its martyrs, stood safe beneath the *ogis* of a Power that was mightier than all the powers of evil. The demon recognised his final defeat, and withdrew once more, baffled and undone, to his rocky fastness. But from that time to this, the reminiscence of this terrible con-

vulsion of Nature has been perpetuated in the name Vaudaire, given to the tempestuous wind which sweeps so frequently at certain seasons down the valley of the Rhone on to the ruffled waters of the lake. Those who have visited the stern solitudes of the Diablerets, and gazed upon its snow-capped splintered peaks, and its wild ravines of riven limestone, can at once recognise the appropriateness of the name, and can understand the superstitious awe with which it has been for centuries regarded by the peasantry. And yet, according to the popular tradition, it was not always so. Its present savage and stony desolation has been the effect, and not the cause of its being the chosen home of the *diablo*. Fragrant pastures, gay with flowers formerly covered the ice-bound slopes at present shrouded by the frowning glacier of Sanfleuron. The Pas de Cheville, now choked with boulders and fragments of shattered rock, was in days gone by a smiling Alpine valley, where *chalets* nestled, and browsing cattle broke the stillness of the balmy air with their tinkling bells. But during the ages that have passed since Vaudai and his ghastly train here fixed their home, their accursed presence has smitten mountain and vale alike with the chill blight of death. Nightly around these forlorn cliffs innumerable demons love to hold high carnival, making the darkness hideous with their fiendish cries as they hurl the rocks down from the topmost heights, rejoicing in the destruction that they cause.

Gruesome are the tales that have been told by belated shepherds and hunters of what they have seen and heard. Suddenly the mountain has been lit up as by a blaze of ghastly light, and in the blue spectral glare unearthly figures have for an instant been discerned circling the peaks in wild whirling spires. Then, as these vanish from the sight, peals of demoniac laughter have issued forth, as if from the profoundest depths of some vast abyss, shaking the very ground with

their hollow reverberation, and making the blood of those who heard them to curdle with horror. But whatever may be the grounds on which such stories rest, certain it is that the area of desolation round the Diablerets grew wider and wider, until as a climax on September 14, 1714, after strange grumbings and dull subterranean noises had for some days previously alarmed the inhabitants of Anziendaz, a vast fragment of the mountain suddenly became detached and, rolling down its precipitous sides, covered more than one hundred and twenty *chalets* with piles of *débris*; and buried in the crash some two hundred men, women and children, and a large number of cattle. A similar catastrophe in 1749, again attended with great loss of life and property, heaped ruin upon ruin, and by building up a barrier across the course of the Luzerne formed the lakelet of Derborence, whose cheerless waters henceforth serve as no unfitting mirror for the revels of the demons, who hold their orgies here every Sabbath night.

But enough of horrors. Evil spirits have their home only in the Diablerets, or other of the sterner mountain masses; but everywhere among the hills are to be found the gentle fairies who perform kind and friendly services to men. In the dialect of the country these light and airy beings, appearing to mortal eyes as female forms of sylph-like beauty veiled in white or blue robes of gauzy texture, are named *faïës*, *fatas*, or *fadhas*. Coily they shrink from the throng of men, and love to seek the secret nooks and quiet hollows of the uplands, their *plans* (small level spaces of herbage), their *scex* (rocks) or their *tannes* (grottoes). Here with heedful care they tend the lovely flowers of the Alpine pastures, breathing into them yet sweeter perfume, and greeting them, as they open their petals to the sun, with many a kiss and gracious smile of welcome. Nor are they devoid of interest in the joys and sorrows of human kind. Over all the events of rustic life they keep watch and ward,

and more especially are courtships, births, and weddings under their tutelage and protection. Nay, so far at times do they carry their sympathy for handsome swains, as to lavish their kindly offices upon the objects of their preference, and use all the witchery of soft seductive glances to win a shepherd's love. The ties thus woven, were (for fairies are now no more) often of long endurance, and unless the intimacy became too close and ended in marriage, were frequently attended by the happiest results. But when, as sometimes happened, a youth captivated by these siren charms, left home and kindred to be wedded to a fairy wife, seldom did the union of natures so dissimilar fail to bring dire evils in its train, for fairy humours are full of contrarieties, and are as quick to resent fancied neglect as to take umbrage at any undue assumption of familiarity.

The fact that tradition represents these fays as dark-complexioned, may perhaps point to their Eastern origin. These slender, dainty beings, with brown skin and long black waving hair, present an ideal of beauty which is not derived from the typical Swiss peasant maiden with her firm robust figure and pink and white complexion. So much is this distinction recognised in all the Alpine fairy lore, that very dark children are frequently called *fayons* (that is of fairy origin), and a brunette is addressed by her lover, as "*Ona galeza fata* (a pretty fay)." One of the most graceful of the many legends relative to the Vaudois fairies is that connected with "*Lu scex que pliau* (the rock that weeps)."

Once upon a time, so runs the tale, a peasant, who lived upon the mountain slopes which enclose the upper bed of the stream known as the Baie de Clarens, not far from the village of Brent, had a pretty daughter whose name was Joliette. Her beauty brought her many suitors, but the one to whom she gave her heart was Albert de Chaulin, the son of a rich seigneur of the neighbourhood, who,

smitten by her rustic charms, had wooed and not in vain. But, as so often happens, the course of true love did not run smooth. The Baron de Chaulin refused to give his consent to so unequal a match, and angrily bade his son to cease all further intercourse with the object of his affections. It was all to no purpose. It chanced one day, that the two lovers, guided by one of the good fairies of the district, wandered into the woods that surrounds the *scex*, and in the sweet seclusion of its shades forgot in each other's society the very existence of the world without. And as they sat side by side upon the mossy slope, listening to the whisper of the summer breeze through the leaves overhead as it mingled with the deeper murmur of the rushing brook beneath, there fell upon their ears the sound as of a voice chanting in clear-toned accents, soft and low, a refrain which seemed the very echo of their thoughts: "Love on! Love on! Sweet are the moments when two hearts beat as one. Love on, for love may fly; yet still love on!"

But suddenly the charm was broken by loud exclamations of indignation and rage, and the Baron himself was seen hastening with angry mien towards the pair. Furious at his son's disobedience he ordered his attendants with loud threats and imprecations to seize the lovers and convey them at once to the dungeons of the castle. Joliette, pale with terror, clung to Albert who, drawing his sword, placed himself before her crying, "Death to him who dares to touch my betrothed, or to harm a hair of her head!" At this moment a female voice was heard: "Move not, my men," it said, "for to me both the youth and maid are dear; and you, my lord, consent to this marriage, and debate no longer, for it is my will that it be now accomplished." "Search the wood," roared the Baron; "find me this insolent chatterer, and hang her to the tallest tree. When this rock shall weep, and not before shall my son wed the wench!" and he

struck the rock with spurred heel. Scarcely were the words spoken, when a cry of surprise burst from all beholders. The rock was dripping, pearly drops of water were falling like spray from every part. "Look," exclaim the archers in their *patois*, "*lu scez pliau! lu scez pliau!* (the rock weeps)." The Baron was struck dumb with astonishment, and seeing a little old woman standing before him with a smile upon her lips, he demanded, "Who are you?" "I am," came the reply, "the fairy of the glen. Within the bounds of my domain I watch over all true lovers, and have taken beneath my special guard this, but now, so happy pair. I know you, Lord of Chaulin. The rock's hard heart is softer than your own; but you are a man of honour, and cannot go back from your own plighted words. Prepare the marriage feast, for behold the rock, it weeps!" So spake the fairy, and the Baron saw that nothing could be done. He had declared that when the rock wept he would give his consent, and weep it did. So he made a virtue of necessity,

and within a few days the nuptials of Albert and Joliette were celebrated with every outward display of magnificence and joy. And from that day to this the rock has never ceased to weep, and more especially in the early summer do the tear-drops patter down in showers, and trickle in little rivulets and moss-grown channels edged with fern to join the swollen waters of the torrent as it brawls below.

When last I saw it the sward around was thickly strewn with sweet narcissus. Upon the slopes of Cubly and the Pleiades the star-like flowers grew in snowy clusters, that whitened all the meadows and made the air heavy with their scent. And at the sight the mind wandered away, from dripping rocks and northern fairy tales, to thoughts of him who in the Grecian legend pined away with fruitless gazing on his mirrored face; then to return and muse, at such a meeting-point of two mythologies, on all that this our boasted nineteenth century has lost of native poetry and true imaginative force.

GEORGE EDMUNDSON.

“AULD ROBIN GRAY.”

NOTWITHSTANDING the great popularity of the ballad, the author of *Auld Robin Gray* has always been more or less of a shadowy figure. There is, however, much that is interesting recorded of Lady Anne Lindsay by the family historians, and still more that we can gather from her own stray reminiscences, especially her *Vagrant Scraps*, as she calls her vivaciously written domestic chronicles. The Lindsays have always been a literary race. From Sir David Lindsay, the poet, who

Branded the vices of the age,
And broke the keys of Rome,

down even to our own day, there never has been a generation which could not boast of a Lindsay devoted to literature, to science, or to art. James Lindsay, the fifth Earl of Balcarres, who lived from 1690 to 1768, and who, as we shall see, filled the old Fifeshire mansion with a family of eleven children after he was sixty, was one of the most cultured and accomplished men of his age. Like his father, he had, not a little to the danger of his own head, taken sides with the Jacobites in 1715 and had thereby considerably embarrassed the family estates. By and by he saw it to be to his interest to renounce his allegiance to Prince Charles Edward, and the best years of his life were spent in faithful service under the banner of the Georges. Still, the rebel taint clung to him firmly. After Dettingen he was represented to the King as a soldier deserving of higher rank, but, “The meanness of the man on this occasion got the better of the dignity of the monarch. He fell into a passion and told the minister that he had occasion to know before that no person who had ever drawn the sword in the Stuart cause should ever rise to command, and that it was best to tell

Lord Balcarres so at once.” As to the latter point he was no doubt right, but he might as well have had the message conveyed many years before. In the circumstances the Earl naturally became disgusted with the army; and having sold his commission he passed to the retirement of the family mansion, where, in the company of the old collection of books which had, as Lady Anne remarked, “made chemists and philosophers of all the moths in the castle,” he no doubt thought the elements of happiness and contentment would be found.

Earl James, however, very soon discovered that the old truism which declares that it is not good for man to be alone had some application to his own case. But then he was not so young as he had been. He was in fact sixty, and what was worse the world insisted on saying he was eighty. No doubt he had some of the externals of a man of rank, and was not without a certain nobility of aspect. Nevertheless, the daughter’s graphic picture of her parent (a picture probably painted for her by others) is not such as to lead us to the belief that he had ever shone as a squire of dames.

To his large brigadier wig, which hung down with three tails, he generally added a few curls of his own application, which, I suspect, would not have been reckoned quite orthodox by the trade. His shoe, which resembled nothing so much as a little boat with a cabin at the end of it, was slashed with his penknife for the benefit of giving ease to his honest toes—here, there, he slashed it where he chose to slash, without an idea that the world or its fashions had the smallest right to smile at his shoe; had they smiled, he would have smiled too, and probably said: “Odsfish! I believe it is not like other people’s but as to that, look, d’ye see? What matters it whether so old a fellow as myself wears a shoe or a slipper?”

Earl James was to discover presently that it mattered a good deal. The solitude and the inaction of the Fifeshire mansion had already proved too much for him. He fell ill, and was advised by the family physician that the cure lay in the mineral waters of Moffat, fifty miles away. To Moffat accordingly the old warrior went, and in the course of time was effectually restored to health,—though not by the waters.

It was all through a certain Miss Dalrymple, a daughter of Sir Robert Dalrymple of Castleton. Lady Anne gives a delightful account, received perhaps from the old man himself, of the first meeting of her father with this charming young lady. Miss Dalrymple was "Fair, blooming, lively; her beauty and *embonpoint* delighted my dear, lean, majestic father. At sixty he began to love with the enthusiasm of twenty-five, but he loved in Miss Dalrymple not the woman she really was, but the woman he thought every female ought to be." Earl James was unfortunately somewhat deaf, and Lady Anne hints that a good deal which he would have been better to know at this time must have escaped him: "He saw with the eyes of his heart and listened with the ears of his imagination." The lady it seems had every good quality save that of feminine gentleness, but perhaps if she had added this to her other virtues she would not have been found heart-whole at the waters of Moffat. There is an old song which inquires, "What would a young lassie do wi' an auld man?" and Miss Dalrymple, still under twenty-two, must have asked the question of herself not a few times after that meeting at Moffat. By the time the old Earl came to propose she had evidently quite made up her mind on the matter, for she refused him—fully, frankly, finally, refused him. It was a terrible blow, and Earl James went home to Balcarres, literally as he expected, to die. He really became seriously ill; but the fire of love still burned warmly,

and the obdurate beauty learned presently through the family solicitor that half of the Balcarres estate had been settled upon her. This was too much devotion to go unrewarded, and so it happened that Earl James rose from the sick-bed to take his place at the altar.

It was a happy union, richly blessed to all concerned. The old Fifeshire mansion again became the cheerful residence of a domestic circle. Little feet were heard pattering on the stairs, and in a few years the Earl who once thought he would die a bachelor was writing that his children were becoming too numerous for his lairdship. "I am sorry for it," he says, "as I cannot provide for so many. Ceres led me into plenty, Venus has again reduced me to poverty. Yet I do not complain, for as the poet says, even the pains of love are preferable to all other pleasures." The Mohammedans reckoned plenty of trees and plenty of children the two highest claims to paradise, and founding on that, Earl James might certainly expect a place there for his good works at seventy-seven. He did not survive the age just mentioned, but passed away quietly, surrounded by his children and attended by his yet beautiful wife still under forty. He had been a good soldier, a good husband, a good father, and what was more to some, a good laird. Many little stories are told in illustration of his kindness of heart under a somewhat rough exterior. One season he had a field of turnips upon which he prided himself a good deal, and walking abroad in the early morning he surprised an old woman busily employed in filling a sack with his favourites. After giving her a hearty scolding, to which she replied only by the silent eloquence of repeated curtsies, he was walking away when the woman called after him: "Eh, my Lord, the bag's unco' heavy. Would ye be sae kind as to help me on to my back wi't it?"—which he did forthwith, when the culprit decamped with profuse thanks!

Lady Anne has sketched in her own lively manner the principal members of the family circle at the Fife mansion. There had long existed a prophecy that the first-born of the last descendant of the house of Balcarres was to restore the Stuarts to their hereditary rights. It was to be a son, of course; but alas! for the fortune-tellers and the gossips, to say nothing of the hopes of Prince Charlie, Lady Balcarres presented the old Earl with a daughter—absolutely but a daughter! This was the child who was to write perhaps the most popular ballad in the Scottish language; a fact which the father did not live to know, but which if he had known would undoubtedly have made up to him for the disappointment he must have felt at the delay of the son and heir. Daughter though it was, we are told that he "thanked his young wife as if she had conferred on him a boon he had no right to expect from her." Lady Balcarres seems to have believed implicitly in the maxim of spare the rod and spoil the child. Little misdemeanours she looked upon as crimes, and as the family grew the mansion-house became a sort of miniature Bastille; hardly a closet in the house but had its daily culprit, some sobbing and repeating refractory verbs, some eating bread and water, some preparing themselves to be whipped. The little Lady Anne was the most difficult of all to punish: her misdeeds were not in general important enough to demand whipping; and bread and water she regarded as rather an agreeable change from the usual dietary. There are indications, however, that she did not escape the more painful ordeal to which her brothers and sisters had occasionally to submit. Lady Balcarres, we learn, chastised mostly with her own "little white hand," and Lady Anne bears testimony that the little white hand, soft though it was, could administer no slight species of flagellation. Here is an interesting reflection on this period of her life, written long after she had passed into womanhood:—

What a good age is this for children. It has even become the fashion to be studious of their morals, manners, and amusements. It was not so in the days of Noah—ah! no. They owe this to Madame de Genlis; others copy her, and so much the better. Parents were formerly harsh and unjust to their children, and sometimes they got bad characters from their relations, all for their good, which accompanied them through life, depressing them perhaps during the half of it. If Tommy was twice a bad boy, he was "the worst boy in the world;" if George stole tarts and denied it from the fear of being whipped he was a "notorious liar and a thief." George feels the epithets in his heart's core for years after the tarts are digested. Long live Madame de Genlis, if she can make youth happier and better without the birch!

Lady Anne, like her little brothers and sisters, stole tarts too, and with charming candour she declares upon her honour that tarts have never tasted so sweet since!

It has been somewhere noted that the observance of the Sabbath makes a series of grim and perhaps serviceable pauses in the tenor of Scotch boyhood,—days of great stillness and solitude for the rebellious mind, when in the dearth of books and play and in the intervals of studying the Shorter Catechism the intellect and senses play upon each other. At Balcarres Sunday was a great day. "Thou shalt do no manner of work" was in the case of the children held to mean the learning of twelve verses of a psalm, walking two miles to church, and reading the Bible for the rest of the time. The Presbyterian service does not seem to have had charms for Lady Anne. She speaks of listening with smiles to the discords by which the congregation assailed the ears, and likens the sensations thus produced to what might be expected from a congregation of converted Hottentots joining in one hymn. But the educational tasks of the week-days were much harder to bear than the Bible-reading and inaction of the Sunday. On one occasion a revolt was made, when the whole troop of youngsters, after taking counsel together, fled to a neighbouring

house where they had before been received with kindness. The little James had not yet got into breeches, and having to be carried most of the three miles he considerably retarded the progress of the fugitives. The juvenile party had not been gone an hour when old Robin Gray the shepherd—mark the name!—reported to the Countess that, “All the young gentlemen and the young ladies, and all the dogs are run away, my lady.” Pursuit was at once organised, and very shortly the culprits were again in their closets at the castle, awaiting the inevitable punishment. On this occasion whipping was considered to be too good, and each of the little criminals was sentenced to a dose of tincture of rhubarb, classically just in degrees, as the eldest, consequently the most guilty, had the last and most offensive glass in the bottle. All this shows the Countess to have been a disciplinarian of the first order. The old Earl was of a more indulgent nature; and although he considered it a point of honour to leave the management of the children entirely to their mother, yet at times he would remonstrate. “Odsfish! madam!” he would say, “I will not have it so; you will break the spirit of my young troop.” That, however, would be about the last thing to happen to a Lindsay, and all these much-chastised and often-incarcerated boys early won military distinction, or made their way honourably in private life. Moreover they surrounded with comfort and kindly attention the serene old age of their once inflexible little mother, who now permitted herself the luxury of being gentle.

Lady Anne Lindsay was but twenty-one when *Auld Robin Gray* was written. The history of the song is interesting enough, even curious enough, to be worth telling pretty fully. Like many of Burns’s best efforts it was written to supplant a bad song,—known by its refrain, “The bridegroom grat [*i.e.*, wept] when the sun gaed down”—which had become as-

sociated with a good air. The rude words with their tune first came to the ears of Lady Anne through an eccentric character named Sophy Johnstone, who went to Balcarres on a visit, and found the place so much to her liking that she remained for thirteen years. In these days of conventionality it is positively refreshing to read of an original type of female such as this Sophy appears to have been. Her father was what is commonly called an odd dog. When Sophy was born he resolved to try an experiment with her, and this experiment took the form of sending her into the world with absolutely no education of any kind. The result of the experiment could hardly be called successful. She taught herself to read, and prevailed on the butler to give her lessons in writing, but her other accomplishments were more varied than elegant. Nature to the last seems to have hesitated whether to make her a man or a woman. Lady Anne tells us that her tastes led her to hunt with her brothers, to wrestle with the stable-boys, and to saw wood with the carpenter. “She worked well in iron, could shoe a horse quicker than the blacksmith, made excellent trunks, played well on the fiddle, sung a man’s song in a bass voice, and was by many people suspected of *being* a man.” Sir Walter Scott knew her well, and speaks of her “jockey coat, masculine stride, strong voice, and occasionally round oath.” He relates an instance of her rudeness. His sister was visiting at a friend’s house, and met Sophy Johnstone there. She happened to move her feet into the space which the masculine Sophy considered peculiarly her own, whereupon the gentle Anne Scott was startled with a kick on the shins, and the inquiry, “What is the lassie wabstering [weaving] there at?” She must have had some likeable qualities, however, since she secured the friendship not only of the Balcarres family, but also of Mrs. Cockburn, author of *The Flowers of the Forest*, and one of the most remarkable women in the

Scottish society of last century. During her later years she developed into a wretched miser, and any one who went to visit her was met with an outstretched palm and the demand, "What have ye brought?"

It is curious to think that but for this eccentric creature the world might never have had *Auld Robin Gray*, the queen of all Scotch ballads, and, as Scott has it, "A real pastoral worth all the dialogues which Corydon and Phillis have had together since the days of Theocritus downwards." Lady Anne became quite enraptured with the old melody sung by the harsh-voiced Sophy, but the rude words were a stumbling-block, and she began to think of replacing them by a new song. Writing to Sir Walter Scott many years afterwards (in 1823) she says:—

I longed to sing old Sophy's air to different words, to give to its plaintive tones some little history of virtuous distress in humble life, such as might suit it. While attempting to effect this in my closet, I called to my little sister, now Lady Hardwicke, who was the only person near me,—“I have been writing a ballad, my dear. I am oppressing my heroine with many misfortunes. I have already sent her Jamie to sea, and broken her father's arm, and made her mother fall sick, and given her auld Robin Gray for her lover; but I wish to load her with a fifth sorrow within the four lines, poor thing! Help me to one.” “Steal the cow, sister Anne,” said the little Elizabeth. The cow was immediately *lifted* and the song completed.

The ballad almost immediately got into circulation, but without the name of the author. Like the Baroness Nairne, Lady Anne shrunk from literary fame, and for more than fifty years, during which time there had been many speculations, some of them wild enough, regarding the history and authorship of *Auld Robin Gray*, she carefully remained silent. “I was pleased in secret,” she writes to Scott, “with the approbation the ballad met with, but such was my dread of being

suspected of writing *anything*, perceiving the shyness it created in those who could write *nothing*, that I carefully kept my own secret.” Some of the controversialists recognised the song as a modern production, while others stoutly maintained that it was of the sixteenth century, some even suggesting that it was the work of the ill-starred David Rizzio! So keen became the discussion that a reward of twenty guineas was offered to any one who would definitely settle the question of the authorship. The Society of Antiquaries took the matter up, and deputed their secretary, Mr. Jerningham, to wait on Lady Anne and examine her closely on the subject. Lady Anne not unnaturally resented this impertinence, and overwhelmed the unlucky secretary in a reply which more than anything else shows the great popularity which the song had even then attained.

The ballad in question [said Lady Anne] has, in my opinion, met with attention beyond its deserts. It set off with having a very fine tune set to it by a doctor of music, was sung by youth and beauty for five years or more; had a romance composed from it by a man of eminence; was the subject of a play, of an opera, of a pantomime; was sung by the united armies in America, acted by Punch, and afterwards danced by dogs in the street, but—never more honoured than by the present investigation!

It was not until the year 1823 that Lady Anne made open avowal of her authorship, when she furnished Sir Walter Scott with all the particulars of Auld Robin's conception and history, in a long letter which the author of *Waverley* printed as a contribution to the Bannatyne Club. Long before this, however, she had been identified in private circles. Lady Anne herself tells that happening to sing the song one day at Dalkeith House, with more feeling perhaps than belonged to a common ballad, Lady Frances Scott smiled and fixing her eyes on the singer said, “You wrote this song

yourself." The blush which followed at once revealed the culprit. "Perhaps," said Lady Anne, "I blushed the more, being then very young, from the recollection of the coarse words from which I had borrowed the tune, and was afraid of the raillery which might have taken place if it had been discovered I had ever heard such words." On this occasion, by the way, Lady Anne seems to have met with some curious criticisms on the song. The Laird of Dalzell, for instance, said privately to her, "My dear, the next time you sing that song, try to change the words a little bit, and instead of singing, *To mak' the crown a pound, my Jamie gaed to sea*, say, *To make it twenty merks*, for a Scottish pound is but twenty pence, and Jamie was not such a fool as to leave Jenny and go to sea to lessen his gear. It is that line," whispered the Laird, "that tells me the song was written by some bonnie lassie that didna ken the value of the Scots money so well as an auld writer in the town of Edinburgh would have kent it. There was a writer in the town of Edinburgh, however, who dissented altogether from old Dalzell's opinion." "A crown," said Sir Walter Scott, "is no denomination of Scottish money, and therefore the pound to which it is to be augmented is not a Scottish pound. If it were objected to this exposition that it is unnatural that Jamie should speak of any other denomination of coin than the Scotch, I would produce you a dozen old papers to prove that the coast of Fife in ancient times carried on a great trade with Holland and other countries, and of course French crowns and pounds sterling were current denominations among them." Sir Walter argues the point at considerable length, but surely prosaic matters of this kind need not enter into the consideration of a work of fancy like *Auld Robin Gray*. The author admitted that there was "something" in the old Laird's objections, but she never corrected the alleged error by *changing* the pound,

which has always passed *current* in its present state.

Various readings of *Auld Robin Gray* were sanctioned by Lady Anne herself, and the multiplication of texts has proved rather annoying. One important variation attracted the notice of Sir Walter Scott. The fifth verse originally read,—

My heart it said nay, and I looked for
Jamie back,
But hard blew the winds, and his ship was
a wrack,
His ship was a wrack—why didna Jamie
dee,
Or why am I spared to cry *Wae's me*?

In the copy which Lady Anne sent to Scott the third line here appeared as, "The ship it was a wreck, why didna *Jeanie* dee?" Of course the keen eye of the master at once detected the change.

I am not quite sure, [wrote Sir Walter,] whether in their mutual distress the wish that Jamie had not survived, beloved as he was, is not more deeply pathetic than that which she utters for her own death. Besides, Jamie's death is immediately connected with the shipwreck, and her own more remotely so,—“It had been better for either of us to have died, than to be as we are now”—I speak all this under great correction, because when one's mind and ear become accustomed to a reading, as mine to this one, it frequently happens that one is impatient even of the substitution of something decidedly better in its place.

To this gentle remonstrance Lady Anne made the following reply.

Your query is a very natural one. When I wrote it first it was, *Why didna Jamie dee?*—"Would he not have been happier dead than seeing my wretchedness and feeling his own?" But the pens of others have changed this to their own fancy, and I suppose my young transcriber has put the word *Jeanie* instead of *Jamie* in the copy you got. I feel the justness of your criticism, and from the first meant it to be as you recommend it.

The author of *The Lives of the Lindsays* prints what he calls the genuine text

along with a curious French version by Florian. This text is not quite identical with the version in popular use; and as Lord Lindsay admits that he has "taken the liberty" of making it up "from the different authentic copies," in his possession it can only be *genuine* in a restricted sense. He gives, however, at the same time the most important of the various readings of the ballad, so that it is in the power of every one to arrange the text to his own liking. *Auld Robin Gray*, in any of its forms, has been fortunate in the admiration of the world, and unfortunate only in the abuse of Pinkerton. Ritson praised it warmly, and he was not as a rule given to praising anything that had its birth in Scotland. "The elegant and accomplished author-ess," says he, "has in this beautiful production, to all that tenderness and simplicity for which the Scottish song has been so much celebrated, united a delicacy of expression which it never before attained." Something of the popularity of the ballad is no doubt due to its tune. This is not the old air which Sophy Johnstone was wont to give out in stentorian tones at Balcarres, but a much finer melody, the composition of the Rev. William Leves, of Wrington in Somersetshire.

Many years after *Auld Robin Gray* was written Lady Anne composed a second part, or continuation. This she explained, she did to please her mother, who wished the world to know "how that unfortunate business of Jeanie and Jamie ended." The unfortunate business had much better been left as it stood. The continuation of the story was a failure, admitted to be a failure even by the author herself. In the sequel Auld Robin is made to die and young Jamie to marry the widow, which undoubtedly destroys the fine conception of the original story, the charm of which lies in the plaintive wail of Jeanie, whose life has been blighted from a desire to save her parents from starvation. Still, there are some pretty touches, such as in the verse describing Auld Robin's watch-

fulness of Jeanie after learning her secret :

Nae questions he spier'd her concerning
her health,
He looked at her often, but aye 'twas by
stealth,
Till his heart it grew great, and sighing he
feign'd
To gang to the door to see if it rain'd.

Scott disliked the continuation as a whole, because it takes away Robin Gray's honest fame, and quite injures the simplicity of the original tale where all are rendered miserable by no evil passions or culpable conduct on any side, but by a source of distress arising out of the best and most amiable feelings of all parties.

While her brothers were searching for wealth or fame in foreign lands Lady Anne resided with a sister in London, where she came in contact with many of the wits and statesmen of the day. Men of distinction and wealth had sought her hand in vain; she remained heart whole until captured late in life by Mr. Barnard, a son of the Bishop of Limerick. Barnard, who was clever though not wealthy, was appointed Colonial Secretary under Lord Macartney, and the newly-wedded pair set out for the Cape of Good Hope, which for them did not belie its name. Lady Anne seems to have spent a gay time at the Cape, giving balls and parties, and doing what she could "To reconcile the Dutch to the sight of their masters by the attraction of fiddles and French horns." In her own house she amused herself with a variety of pet animals. There was a buck, so attached to her that it would have slept at her feet had not Mr. Barnard objected. She had a pair of secretary birds which never ate standing, but regularly sat down to dinner; a sea-calf which had been induced to live by its mouth being filled with milk every time it opened its jaws to bewail its forlorn condition; a penguin which divided its time between a pond and the drawing room; and two jackals which used to race round the fortifica-

tions followed by all the dogs of the colony. Lady Anne had no children herself, and as she found that large families were objects of pride with the Dutch, she disarmed the pity extended to her by taking credit for three or four boys in England. Some of her adventures are amusing enough. She organised an expedition to the top of Table Mount, herself being the only lady of the party. She donned for the occasion a portion of Mr. Barnard's attire, which, of course, provoked some banter between them as to her "wearing the breeks." She reached the top first, attributing her agility as much to the lightness of her heart as to the lightness of her heels, and she led the party in *God Save the King!* on the summit. Lady Anne's journals give some curious revelations of the state of the colony at this time. A nobleman called at the Cape on his way to India to assume the office of Governor-General, but the Dutchman's house where he was accommodated was so infested with bugs that His Excellency was obliged to beseech Lady Anne to have mercy on him, and she put him up in a back parlour, opening on the yard where dwelt her aforementioned pets.

When the Cape was restored to the Dutch in 1802, Lady Anne returned to England. Six years later Mr. Barnard died, and she went to reside with her sister, Lady Margaret, in London. The years that remained to her she devoted mainly to compiling materials for a continuation of the *History of the Lindsays*. To the end she was as cheerful as any "light Lindsay" could well be. "When alone," she says, "I am not five-and-twenty; I can entertain myself with a succession of inventions, which would be more effective if they

were fewer. I forget that I am sixty-eight, and if by chance I see myself in the glass, looking very abominable, I do not care." Her stores of anecdote seem to have been peculiarly rich. As a specimen of her piquant manner of relating a story, take this of her grandfather, Earl Colin, one of the handsomest men of his day, who had begun his matrimonial career by captivating a Dutch lady, cousin to William of Orange. Lord Balcarres is on his way to France and stops in Holland that he may pay a visit to the relations of the first Lady Balcarres.

He appeared before them with that mitigated mildness of well-bred sorrow, which, after a lapse of fifteen or twenty years, and two or three wives in the interim, was not supposed to be very lively. They were all grown old, but the circumstances attending the whole remaining fresh in their minds from having less to think of than he had, they presumed he would have a melancholy pleasure in looking at the picture of his first wife. He replied that her picture was unnecessary to recall features he never could forget—there she was! (looking at a painting well appointed as to frame, and honourably stationed over the chimney-piece) her manner—her air! The honest *crow* smiled: *it was one of the four seasons!*

Lady Anne Barnard passed away in 1825 with vigour of intellect unimpaired, and her delightful conversation enlivened to the close by the proverbial cheerfulness of her race. She left no proof of her genius which could be placed on an equality with *Auld Robin Gray*. She wrote other poetical pieces, but none of them ever became popular; and she goes down to fame simply as the author of a single song.

J. CUTHBERT HADDEN.

ARMAND'S MISTAKE.

I.

UNTIL the age of twenty-one, Armand Ulrich submitted to the controlling influences around him,—somewhat gracelessly, be it admitted. He sat out his uncle's long dinners, and solaced himself by sketching on the cloth between the courses. He showed a discontented face at his mother's weekly receptions in a big Parisian hotel, and all the while his heart was out upon the country roads and among the pleasant fields, where the children played under poplars and dabbled on the brim of reedy streams. At twenty-one, however, he regarded himself as a free man, and threw up a situation worth £50,000 a year or thereabouts. From this we may infer that he was a lad full of bright hopes and fair dreams.

He was the only son of a Frenchwoman of noble birth and of the junior partner of a wealthy Alsatian banking-house. His taste for strolling and camping out of doors, sketch-book in hand and pipe in mouth, was partly an inherited taste, with the difference that transmission had strengthened instead of having weakened the heritage. In earlier days Ulrich junior had not shown an undivided spirit of devotion to commercial interests; he had, on the contrary, permitted himself the treasonable luxury of gazing abroad upon many objects not connected with the business of the firm. Amateur theatricals had engaged his affections in youth; five-act tragedies, in alexandrines as long as the acts, had proved him fickle, and operatic music had sent him fairly distraught. He aspired to excel in all the arts, and as a fact was successful in none.

When congratulated upon his brother's versatility, Ulrich senior would contemptuously retort that the

fellow was able to do everything except attend to his business. As a result, he was held in light esteem at the bank, and the meanest client would have regarded himself insulted if passed for consultation to this accomplished but incompetent representative of the firm. However agreeable his tastes may have rendered him in society, it cannot be denied that they were of a nature to diminish his commercial authority. Humanity wisely draws the line at a sonneteer-ing banker, and looks upon the ill-assorted marriage of account and sketch-book with a natural distrust.

This state of things broke the banker's heart. He had a reverence for the firm of Ulrich Brothers, and if he considered himself specially gifted for anything, it was for the judicious management of its affairs. Thus he lived and died a misappreciated and misunderstood person. To him it was a grievous injustice that he should be treated as a man of no account, because of a few irregular and purely decorative accomplishments. His heart might be led astray, he argued, but his head was untampered with, and that, after all, is the sole organ essential to the matter of bonds and shares. A man may be a wise head of a family and an honest husband, and not for that unacquainted with lighter loves. Such trifles are but gossiping pauses in the serious commotions and preoccupations of life. But no amount of argument, however logical, could blind him or others to the fact that commercially he was a dead failure, because a few ill-regulated impulses had occasionally led him into idle converse with two or three of the disreputable Nine; and mindful of this, he solemnly exhorted his son Armand to fix his thoughts upon the bank, and not let himself be led

astray like his misguided father by illusive talents and disastrous tastes.

Armand Ulrich was a merry young fellow, who cared not a button for all the privileges of wealth, and looked upon an office stool with loathing. He only wanted the free air, his pencil, and a comfortable pipe of tobacco,—and there he was, as he described himself, the happiest animal in France. Before his easel he could be serious enough, but in his uncle's office he felt an irresistible inclination to burst into profane song, and make rash mention of such places of perdition as the Red Mill and the Shepherd Follies,—follies perfectly the reverse of pastoral. He was not in the least depraved, but he took his pleasure where he found it, and made the most of it. A handsome youngster, whom the traditional felt hat and velvet jacket of art became a trifle too well. At least he wore this raiment somewhat ostentatiously, and winked a conscious eye at the maids of earth. With such solid advantages as a bright audacious glance, a winning smile, and a well-turned figure, he was not backward in his demands upon their admiration, and it must be confessed, that men in all times have proved destructive with less material.

But he was an amiable rogue, not consciously built for evil, and he cheated the women not a whit more than they cheated him. He knew he was playing a game, and was fair enough to remember that there is honour among thieves. For the rest, he was fond of every sort of wayside stoppages, paid his bill ungrudgingly, in whatever coin demanded, like a gentleman, and clinked glasses cordially with artists, strollers, and such like vagabonds. The frock-coated individual alone inspired him with repugnance, and he held the trammels of respectability in horror. Whether nature or his art were responsible for a certain loose and merry generosity of spirit, I cannot say; but I am of opinion that, had his mind run to bank-books instead of paints, though his work might be of indifferent

quality, he might have proved himself of sounder and more sordid disposition.

Even the brightest nature finds a shadow somewhere upon the shine, and the shade that dimmed the sun for Armand was his mother's want of faith in his artistic capacities. He loved his mother fondly, and took refuge from her wounding scepticism in his conviction that women, by nature and training, are unfitted to comprehend or pronounce upon the niceties of art. They may be perfect in all things else, but they have not the artistic sense, and cannot descry true talent until they have been taught to do so. It has ever been the destiny of great men to be under-valued upon the domestic hearth, and 'tis a wise law of Nature to keep them evenly balanced, and set a limit to their inclination to assume airs. Thinking thus, he shook off the chill of unappreciated talent, and warmed himself back into the pleasant confidence that was the lad's best baggage upon the road of life. For a moment an upbraiding word, a cold comment upon dear lips, might check his enthusiasm and cloud his mirthful glance, but a whistled bar of song, a smart stroke of pencil or brush, a glimpse of his becoming velvet jacket in a mirror, were enough to send hope blithely through his veins, and speed him carolling on the way to fame.

It chanced one morning that he was interrupted at his easel by a letter from that domestic unbeliever who cast the sole blot upon his artist's sunshine. There was a certain haziness in Armand's relations with art. He worked briskly enough at intervals, but he was naturally an idler. The attitude he preferred was that of uneager waiter upon inspiration, and he had a notion that the longer he waited, provided the intervals of rest were comfortably subject to distraction, the better the inspiration was likely to be. He had neither philosophy nor moral qualifications to fit him for the jog-trot of daily work. So

that no interruption ever put him out, and no intruder ever found him other than unaffectedly glad to be intruded upon. Such a youth would of course attack his letters in the same spirit of hearty welcome as he fell upon his friends.

But as he sat and read, his bright face clouded, and his lips screwed and twisted themselves into a variety of grimaces. He had a thousand gestures and expressions at the service of his flying moods, and before he had come to the end of his mother's letter, not one but had been summoned upon duty. The letter ran thus :

MY DEAR SON,—It will, I hope, inspire you with a little common sense to learn that your cousin Bernard Francillon has just arrived from Vienna to take your place at the bank. I have had a long interview with your uncle, who makes no secret of his intentions, should you persist in wasting your youth and prospects in this extravagant fashion. And I cannot blame him, for his indulgence and patience have much exceeded my expectations. This absurd caprice of yours has lasted too long. You are no longer a boy, Armand, but a young man of twenty-three, and you have no right to behave like a silly child, who aspires to fly, instead of contentedly riding along in the solid family coach provided for him. If I had any confidence in your talent I might, as you do, build my hopes upon your future fame, and console myself for present disappointment in the faith that your sacrifice is not in vain. But even a mother cannot be so foolish as to believe that her son is going to turn out a Raphael because he has donned a velvet coat and bought a box of paints. Some natural talent and cultivation will help any young man to become a fair amateur, perhaps even a tenth-rate artist ; but for such it is hardly worth while to wreck all worldly prospects. Take your father as an example. He did all things fairly well ; he drew, painted, sang, composed, and wrote. What was the end of it ? Failure all round. He had not the esteem of his commercial colleagues, while the artists, in whose society he delighted, indulged his tastes as those of an accomplished banker whose patronage might be useful to them. While he was wrecked upon versatility, you intend to throw away your life upon a single illusion. Whose will be the gain ?

Your whim has lasted two years, and

you cannot be blind to the little you have done in that time. You have not had any success to justify further perseverance. Then take your courage in both hands ; assure yourself that it is wiser to be a good man of business than a bad artist ; lock up your studio and come back to your proper place. If you do so at once, Bernard will have less chance of walking in your shoes. He is much too often at Marly, and seems to admire Marguerite ; but I do not think a girl like Marguerite could possibly care for such a perfumed fop.

When you feel the itch for vagabondage and sketch-book, you can be off into the country, and it need never be known that your holidays are passed in any but the most correct fashion. As for your uncle, he will not endure paint-boxes or pencils about him. He is still bitter upon the remembrance of your father's sins in office hours. I am told he used to draw caricatures on the blotting-pads, and write verses on the fly-leaves of the account-books. He was much too frivolous for a banker, and I fear you have inherited his light and unbusiness-like manners. But be reasonable now, and come at once to your affectionate mother,

SOPHIE ULRICH.

Poor Armand ! The mention of Raphael in connection with the velvet coat and paint-box was a sore wound. It whipped the susceptible blood into his cheeks, for though sweet-tempered, a sneer was what he could not equably endure. Surely his mother might have found a tenderer way to say unpleasant things, if the performance of this duty can ever be necessary ! And bitter to him was the assumption that his choice was a caprice without future or justification. Having swallowed his pill with a wry face, he was still in the middle of a subsequent fit of indigestion, when the door opened, and a young man in a linen blouse cried gaily : " It's a case of the early bird on his matutinal round."

" Come in, since the worm is fool enough to be abroad. You may make a meal of him, my friend, and welcome, but a poor one, for he's at this moment the sorriest worm alive."

The young man shot into the room, inelegantly performed a step of the Red Mill to a couple of bars of un-

melodious song of a like diabolical suggestion, and seated himself on the arm of a chair, twisting both legs over and round the other arm and back. In this grotesque attitude, he languidly surveyed his friend, and said, sentimentally: "I have had a letter from her this morning. She relents, my friend, in long and flowery phrases, with much eloquence spent upon the harshness of destiny and the cruelty of parents. Where would happy lovers be, Armand, if there were no destiny to rail against and no parents to arrange unhappy marriages?"

"Nowhere, I suppose. Doubtless the parents have the interests of the future lover in view when they choose the unsympathetic husband, and everything is for the best. I congratulate you. For the moment, I am empty-handed, and filled with a sense of the meanness of all things; so I am in a position to give you my undivided attention," said Armand dejectedly.

"What's this? I come to you, to pour the history of my woes and joys into a sympathetic bosom, and if you had just buried all your near relatives you could not look more dismal."

"I should probably feel less dismal, had I done so. But it is a serious matter when your art is scoffed at, and you are told that you imagine yourself a Raphael because you wear a velvet coat and handle a brush."

"*En effet*, that is a much more serious matter," Maurice admitted, and at once assumed an appropriate air of concern.

Armand glanced ruefully at his coat sleeve, and began to take off the garment of obloquy with great deliberateness.

"Spare thyself, my poor Armand, even if others spare thee not. Knowest thou not that the coat is more than half the man? A palette and a velvet coat have ever been wedded, and why this needless divorce?"

"I will get a blouse like yours, Maurice, and wear it," said Armand,

with an air of gloomy resignation befitting the occasion.

"And who has reduced you to these moral straits, and to what deity is the coat a holocaust?"

For answer Armand held out his mother's letter, which the young man took, and read attentively, with an expression of lugubrious gravity. He lifted a solemn glance upon Armand, and shook his head like a sage.

"Your mother is not a flattering correspondent, I admit. It is clear, she expected you to justify your immoral choice by an extraordinary start. She does not define her expectations. 'Tis a way with women. But I take it for granted that she esteemed it your duty to cut out Meissonnier, or by a judicious combination of Puvis de Chavannes and Carolus Duran, show yourself in colours of a capsizing originality, and finally go to wreck upon a tempest of your own making. For there is nothing in life more unreasonable than a mother. But go to her to-morrow, and tell her you have doffed the obnoxious coat, and intend to live and die in the workman's modest blouse."

"I am not going," Armand protested, sullenly. "I have made my choice, and I can't be badgered and worried any more about it."

As behoves a poor devil living from hand to mouth upon the problematical sale of his pictures, Maurice Brodeau had a tremendous respect for all that wealth implies, and like the rest of the world, regarded Armand's renunciation of it as a transient caprice that by this time ought to be on the wing. He expressed himself with a good deal of sound sense, and thereby evoked a burst of wrathful indignation.

"Money! Money! Ah, how I hate the word, hate still more the look of the thing! I have watched them at the bank shovelling gold, solid gold pieces till my heart went sick. Where's the good of it? It fills the prisons, takes all life and brightness out of humanity, builds us iron safes, and turns us into sordid-minded knaves. Where's

the crime that can't be traced to its want? and where's the single ounce of happiness it brings? We are dull with it, envious without it, and yet it is only the uncorrupted poor who really enjoy themselves and who are really generous. The rich man counts where the poor man spends, and which of the two is the wiser? In God's name, let us knock down the brazen idol, and proclaim, without fear of being laughed at, that there are worthier and pleasanter objects in life, and that it is better to watch the fair aspects of earth than to jostle and strive with each other in its mean pursuit. My very name is distasteful to me, because it represents money. It is a pass-word across the entire world, at which all men bow respectfully. And yet, I vow, I would sooner wander through the squalor and wretchedness of Saint-Ouen, any day, than find myself in the neighbourhood of the Rue de Grenelle. There may be other houses in that long street, but for me it simply means the bank. So I feel upon sight of my mother's hotel. Her idle and overfed servants irritate me. Everything about her brings the air of the bank about my nostrils, and I only escape it here, where, thank God, I have not got a single expensive object. I smoke cheap cigarettes, which my poorest friends can buy. I drink beer, and sit on common chairs. Well, these are my luxuries, and I take pride in the fact that there is very little gold about me. I can sign a cheque for a friend in need, whenever he asks me, and that's all the pleasure I care to extract from the legacy of my name. For the rest, I would forget that I have sixpence more than is necessary for independence."

A youth of such moral perversity was not to be driven down the cotton-spinner's path, you see, and Maurice, with the tact and discretion of his race, forebore further argument, and contented himself with a silent shrug.

But Madame Ulrich was not so discreet. She was a woman of deter-

mination, moreover, and knew something of her son's temperament. If in her strife with what Armand gloriously called his mistress she had been worsted, as was shown by the boy's sulky silence, she could enlist in her service a weapon of whose terrible power she had no doubt. A man may sulk in the presence of his mother, but unless he has betaken himself to the woods in the mood of a Timon, he cannot sulk in the presence of a beautiful young woman, who comes to him upon sweet cousinly intent.

At least Armand could not, and he had too much sense to make an effort to do so. On the whole, he was rather proud of his weakness as an inflammable and soft-hearted youth. He saw the fair vision, behind his mother's larger proportions, for the first time in his studio, and made a capitulating grimace for the benefit of his friend, who was staring at the biggest heiress of Europe with all his might, amazed to find her such a simple-looking and inexpensively arrayed young creature. Maurice had perhaps an indistinct notion that the daughters of millionaires traversed life somewhat overweighted by the magnificence of their dress, bonneted as no ordinary girl could be, and habited accordingly.

"One sees thousands of women dressed like her," he thought to himself, after a quick appraising glance at her gown and hat. "A hundred francs, I believe, would cover the cost. But there is this about a lady," he added, as an after reflection, while his eyes eagerly followed her movements and gestures, the flow of her garments and the lines of her neck and back; "simplicity is her crown. There is no use for the other sort to try it; they can't succeed, and we know them. If Armand does not follow that girl to bank or battle, he's an unmannerly ass."

It was not in Armand to meet unsmilingly the arch glance of a smiling girl, even if there were not beauty in her to prick his senses and hold him thrilled. Forgetful of the unwelcome

fact that she was worth more than her weight in solid gold, he melted at the sound of her voice, and his foolish heart went out to her upon the touch of her gloved fingers. Not as a lover certainly, for was she not the desired of all unmarried Europe? There was not a titled or monied bride-hunter upon the face of the civilised world with whom he had not heard her name coupled, while he was ignorant of the fact that the great man, her father, had destined him to complete her, until he bolted in pursuit of fortune on his own account.

It flattered him to see that she had captivated his friend, too, not contemptuous of the prospect of exciting a little envy in the breast of that individual; and he shot him a look of radiant gratitude when he saw him bent upon engaging the attention of Madame Ulrich, who was nothing loth to be so caught. She smiled sadly, as Maurice chattered on in high praise of her son's genius, and quoted the opinion of their common master in evidence of his own discernment. From time to time she cast a hopeful eye upon the cousins, and mentally thanked Marguerite for her delicate tact and rare wisdom.

Not a word of comment or surprise upon the bareness of the studio or the shabbiness of the single-cushioned chair upon which she sat; no allusion to his sacrifice, or wonder at it. The charming girl seemed to take it for granted that a lad of talent should find the atmosphere of commerce irksome, and gallantly admitted that such a choice would have been hers, had she been born a boy. To wander about the world with a knapsack, and eat in dear little cheap inns with rough peasants; to wear a silk kerchief and no collar, and have plenty of pockets filled with cord and penknives, and matches, and tobacco, and pencils, and pocket-books; to sleep under the stars, and bear a wetting bravely,—this is the sort of thing she vowed she would have enjoyed, did petticoats and sex and other

contrarieties not form an impediment.

Such pretty babble might not be intended to play into her elders' hands, Madame Ulrich perhaps thought, but it was very wise play for that susceptible organ, a young man's heart, whether conscious or not. And that once gained, one need never despair of the reversal of all his idols for love.

When they left the studio, Armand stood looking after them, with his hands in his pockets, under his linen blouse, plunged in profound meditation, the nature of which he revealed soon to his friend.

"And to think there goes the biggest prey male rascal ever sighed for, Maurice. What title do you imagine will buy her? Prince or duke, for marquis is surely below the mark. Think of it, my friend. There is hardly a wish of hers that money cannot gratify, unless it be a throne or a cottage. And the throne itself is easier come by for such as she than the cottage. What an existence! What a dismal future! What lassitude! What hunger, by and by, for dry bread and cheese and common pewter! A more nauseous destiny must it be, that of the richest woman in the world than even that of the richest man. At least a man can smoke a clay pipe, and take to drink, or the road to the devil in any other way. But what is there left a woman whose wedding trousseau will contain pocket-handkerchiefs that cost a hundred pounds apiece? My aunt Mrs. Francillon's handkerchiefs cost that. Mighty powers! what an awful way these charming and futile young creatures are brought up! And you see for yourself, this girl is no mere fashionable fool. She, too, would have sacrificed the title and the handkerchiefs, if it were not for the restrictions with which she has been hedged from birth. Let us bless our stars, Maurice, that we were not born girls, and equally bless our stars that girls are born for us."

II.

MADAME ULRICH and her niece came again to the studio. They came very often. Armand began by counting the days between their visits, and ended in such a state of lyrical madness that Romeo was sobriety itself alongside of him. In anticipation of the sequel, Maurice supported the trial of his morning, midday, and evening confidences with a patience deserving the envy of angels. And not a thought of commiseration had the raving young madman for him, and only sometimes remembered, at the top of his laudatory bent, to break off with courteous regret for the unoccupied state of his friend's heart.

"I wish to God you were married to her," said Maurice one day, and Armand naturally trusted the prayer would be heard at no distant period.

It was the hour of Marguerite's visit. To see the charming girl seated in the shabby arm-chair he had bought at a sale in the Hôtel Drouot, so perfectly at home, and so naively pleased with little inexpensive surprises, such as a bunch of flowers in a common jar, an improvised tea made over their daily spirit-lamp, much the worse for constant use; to see her so vividly interested in the everyday life of a couple of Bohemians, the cost of their marketings, their bargains and the varieties of their meals, their cheap amusements, unspoiled by dress-suit or crush hat, and eager over that chapter of their distractions that may safely be recounted to a well-bred maiden. Armand had never known any pleasure in his life so full of freshness and untainted delight. Bitterly then did he regret that there should be episodes upon which a veil must be dropped. These, I suppose, are regrets common to most honest young fellows for the first time in love. He would have liked to be able to tell her everything, not even omitting his sins, as she sat there, and listened to him with an air so divinely confiding and credulous. He had a wild notion that he might be purified from

past follies, and not a few dark scenes he dared not remember in her presence, if he might kneel and drop his humbled head in her lap, and feel the touch of her white hands as a benediction and an absolution upon his forehead. He was full of all sorts of romantic and sentimental ideas about her, little dreaming that the clock of fate was so close upon the midnight chimes of hope, and that the curtain was so soon to drop upon this pleasant pastoral played to city sounds.

One day his mother came alone. One glance took in the blank disappointment of his expression and all its meaning. She scrutinised him sharply, and found the ground well prepared for the words of wisdom she had come to sow. She spoke of Marguerite, and the troubled youth drank in the sound of her voice with avidity. Did he love his cousin? How could he tell? He knew nothing but that he lived upon her presence; that the thought of her filled the studio in her absence; that he dwelt incessantly upon the memory of her words and looks and gestures. This he supposed was love, only he wished the word were fresher. It was applied to the feeling inspired by ordinary girls, whereas she was above humanity, and he was quite ready to die for one kiss of her lips.

When the blank verse subsided, Madame Ulrich bespoke the commonplace adventure of marriage, and made mention of two serious rivals, an English marquis and his cousin Bernard Francillon. The mention of the marquis he endured, and sighed; but his cousin's name stung his blood like a venomous bite, he could not tell why. His brain was on fire, and he sat with his head in his hands in great perplexity.

It was the hour of solemn choice; the renunciation of his liberty and pleasant vagabondage, or the hugging in private for evermore of a sweet dream that would make a symphonious accompaniment to his march upon the road of life. Could the flavour of his love survive the vulgarity of wealth,

of newspaper-paragraphs, wedding-presents, insincere congratulations, a honeymoon enjoyed under the stare of the gazing multitude, the dust of social receptions, dinners, and all the ugly routine he had flown from? On the other hand, could he ask a daintily reared girl, like his cousin, to tramp the country roads and fields with him, to wander comfortless from wayside inn to hamlet, and back to an ill-furnished studio, at the mercy of the seasons and with no other luxuries than kisses, which for him, he imagined, would ever hold the rapture and forgetfulness of the first one? The choice meant the clipping of his own wings and perhaps moral death, for her ultimate misery, or the tempered loveliness of a dream preserved and substantial bliss rejected.

He could not make up his mind that day, and sent his mother away without an answer. Maurice Brodeau was not informed of his dilemma. It was matter too delicate in this stage for discussion. But the night brought him no nearer to decision, and standing before his easel, making believe to be engaged upon a sketch he had lately taken at Fontainebleau, he held serious debate within himself whether he ought to consult his friend or not.

In his studio up stairs, Maurice was loitering near the window in an idle mood, and saw a quiet brougham stop in front of their house in the Avenue Victor Hugo. He watched the slow descent of an old man dressed in a shabby frock-coat, untidily cravated, who leaned heavily upon a thick-headed cane. The old gentleman surveyed the green gate on which were nailed the visiting-cards of the two artists, and jerked up a sharp pugnacious chin.

"Our ancient uncle, the respectable and mighty banker, of a surety," laughed Maurice, on fire for the explanation of the riddle.

The head of the firm of Ulrich pushed open the gate, sniffed the air of the damp courtyard, and solemnly mounted the wooden stairs, making a kind of judicial thud with his heavy stick.

"The jackanapes!" he muttered, for the benefit of a tame cat. "It is a miracle how these young fools escape typhoid fever, living in such places."

Maurice cautiously peeped over the banisters, and saw the old gentleman turn the handle of Armand's door without troubling to knock. "Good Lord," thought the watcher, "it is fortunate friend Armand has broken with that little devil Yvette, or the old bear might have had the chance of putting a fine spoke in his wheel with cousin Marguerite."

Armand in his linen blouse was standing in front of his easel, with his back to the door. He was certainly working, but his mind was not so fixed upon his labour but that he had more than an odd thought for his cousin. Pretty phrases, gestures, and expressions of hers kept running through his thoughts, as an under melody sometimes runs through a piece of music, unaggressively but soothingly claiming the ear. They brought her presence about him, to cheer him in the midst of his solemn preoccupations upon their mutual destiny. While his reason said no, and he regarded himself as a fine fellow for listening to reason at such a moment, her lips curved and smiled and bent to his in imagination's first spontaneous kiss. And then he told himself pretty emphatically that he was growing too sentimental, and that it behoves a man to take his pleasure and his pains heartily and bravely, and not go abroad whimpering for the moon. Just when he had made up his mind to shoulder his moral baggage and, whistling merrily, face the solitary roads, he was made to jump and fall back into perplexity by a crusty well-known voice.

"Well, young man! So this is where you waste your time."

Armand swung round in great alarm, and reddened painfully.

"You look astounded, and no wonder. 'Tis an honour I don't often pay young idiots like you. Ouf, man! Look at his dirty jacket. Your father

was a rock of sense in comparison. At least, he did not get himself up like a baker's boy, and go roystering in company with a band of worthless rascals."

"I presume, uncle, you have come here for something else besides the pleasure of abusing my father to me."

"There he is now, off in a rage. Can't you keep cool for five minutes, you hot-headed young knave? What concern is it of mine if you choose to die in the workhouse? But there's your mother. It frets her, and I esteem your mother, young sir."

Armand lifted his brows discontentedly. He held his tongue, for there was nothing to be said, as he had long ago beaten the weary ground of protest and explanation.

"The rascal says nothing, thinks himself a great fellow, I've no doubt. The Almighty made nothing more contrary and mischievous than boys. They have you by the ears when you want to sit comfortably by your fireside. Finds he's got a heart too, I hear. Mayhap that will sober him, though I'm doubtful."

Armand stared, and changed colour like a girl. He eyed his uncle apprehensively, and began to fiddle with his brushes. "I—I don't understand you, sir," he said, tentatively.

"Yes, you do, but you think it well to play discretion with me. I'm the girl's father, and there's no knowing how I may take it, eh, you young villain?"

The old man pulled his nephew's ear, and laughed in a low chuckling way peculiar to crusty old gentlemen.

"Has my mother spoken to you about,—about—?"

"Suppose she hasn't, eh? What then?"

"I am completely in the dark," Armand gasped. "How could you guess such a thing, uncle?"

"Suppose I haven't guessed it either, eh? What then?"

Armand's look was clearly an interrogation, almost a prayer. He blinked his lids at the vivid flash of conjecture,

and shook his head dejectedly against it. "You can't mean—no, it cannot be that——"

The old man wagged a very sagacious head.

"Marguerite!" shouted the astounded youth, and there was a feeling of suffocation about his throat.

"Suppose one foolish young person liked to believe she had a partner in her folly, eh, young man? What then?"

"My cousin, too!"

"And if it were so, eh? What then?"

"Good God! uncle, why do you come and tell me this?" The dazed lad began to walk about distractedly, and was not quite sure that it was not the room that was walking about instead of his own legs.

"I think we may burn the sticks and daubs and brushes now, eh, young man?" laughed the old man, wagging his stick instead of his head in the direction of Armand's easel, and giving a contented vent to his peculiar chuckle. "Burn the baker's blouse, and dress yourself like a Christian. When you are used to the novelty of a coat and a decent dinner you may come down to Marly and see that giddy-pated girl of mine. But a week of steady work at the bank first, and mind, no paint-boxes or dirty daubers about the place. If I catch sight of any long-haired fellow smelling of paint I'll call the police."

Armand gazed regretfully round his little studio. He picked out each familiar object with a sudden sense of separation and a wish to bear them ever with him in that long farewell glance. But the sadness was a pleasant sadness, for was not happy love the beacon that lured him forth, and when the heart is young what lamp shines so radiantly and invites so winningly? Still, it was a sacrifice, though beyond lay the prospect of a lover's meeting, in which the thought of stuff so common as gold would lie buried in the first pressure of a girl's lips.

"You are not decided, I dare say?" sneered his uncle.

Armand met his eyes unflinchingly, and held out his hand. "A man who is worth the name can't regret love and happiness. For Marguerite's sake I will do my best in the new life you offer, and I thank you, uncle, for the gift."

"That young fop from Vienna will feel mighty crest-fallen," was the reflection of the head of the Ulrich Bank, as he hobbled down stairs. He disliked the elegant Bernard, and was himself glad to have back his favourite nephew, though the means he had employed to secure that result might not be of unimpeachable honesty.

The banker's departure was the signal for Maurice on the look-out up stairs. He bounded down the stairs, three steps at a time, and shot in upon the meditative youth. Armand glanced up, and smiled luminously. "The besieged has capitulated, Maurice."

"So I should think. For some time back you have worn the air of a man on the road to bondage."

Brodeau had never for an instant doubted that this would be the end of it. He mildly approved the conventional conclusion, though not without private regrets of his own.

"A girl's eyes have done it," sighed Armand, sentimentally.

"Of course, of course, the old temptation. But she would have inveigled Anthony out of his hermitage. A sorry time you'll have of it, I foresee, though I honestly congratulate you. It is a thing we must come to sooner or later, and the escapades of youth have their natural end, like all things else. Only lovers believe in eternity, until they have realised the fragility of love itself. It was absurd to imagine you could go on flouting fortune for ever, and living in a shanty like this, with a palace ready for you on the other side of the river. But there is consolation for me in the thought that you will give me a big

order in commemoration of your marriage, eh, old man?"

When it came to parting the young men wrung hands with a sense of more than ordinary separation. For two years had they shared fair and foul weather, and camped together out of doors and under this shabby roof, upon which one was now about to turn his back. The days of merry vagabondage were at an end for Armand, and his face was now towards civilisation and respectable responsibilities. He might revisit this scene of pleasant Bohemia, and find things unchanged, but the old spirit would not be with him, and the zest of old enjoyments would be his no more.

"Many a merry tramp we've had together, Armand," said Maurice, and he felt an odd sensation about his throat while his eyelids pricked queerly. "We've got drunk together on devilish bad wine, and pledged ourselves eternally to many a worthless jade. We've smoked a pipe we neither of us shall forget, and walked beneath the midnight stars in many a curious place. And now we part, you for gilded halls and wedding chimes, I to seek a new comrade, and make a fresh start across the beaten track of Bohemia."

Maurice crammed his knuckles furiously into his eyes. His eloquence had mounted to his head, and flung him impetuously into his friend's arms, with tears streaming down his cheeks. "You'll come back again, won't you, Armand?"

"Come back? Yes," Armand replied sadly; "but I shall feel something like Marius among the ruins of Carthage."

"I'll keep your velvet jacket, and when you are tired of grandeur and lords and dukes, you can drop in here and put it on, and smoke a comfortable pipe in your old arm-chair."

Maurice went straightway to the nearest *café*, and spent a dismal evening, consuming bock after bock, until he felt sufficiently stupefied to face his solitary studio, where he shed

furtive tears in contemplation of all his friend's property made over to him as an artist's legacy.

Though brimming over with happiness and excitement, Armand himself was not quite free of regret for the relinquished velvet jacket and brushes and boxes, as he made his farewell to wandering by a journey on the top of an omnibus from the Étoile to the Rue de Grenelle, and solaced himself with a cheap cigarette.

For one long week did he work dutifully at the bank, inspected books with his uncle, and repressed an inclination to yawn over the dreary discussion of shares and bonds and funds, of vast European projects and policies in jeopardy, and he felt the while a smart of homesickness for the little studio in the Avenue Victor Hugo. In the evening he dined with his mother, and found consolation for the irksomeness of etiquette in the excellence of the fare. He thought of Marguerite incessantly, and spoke of her whenever he could, but he did not forget Maurice or the cooking-stove, on which their dinners in the olden days had so often come to grief. He might sip Burgundy now, yet he relished not the less the memory of the big draughts of beer which he and Maurice had found so delicious.

III.

BUT all these pinings and idle regrets were silenced, and gave place to rapturous content the first afternoon on which he walked up the long avenue of his uncle's country-house at Marly. The week of trial was at an end, and he was now to claim his reward from dear lips. Everything under the sun seemed to him perfect, and even banks had their own charm, discernible to the happy eye. There was a beauty in gold he had hitherto failed to perceive, and crusty old gentlemen were the appropriate guardians of lovely nymphs. In such a mood, there is melody in all things, and warmth lies even in frosted starlight. Nothing

but the sweetness of life is felt: its turbidness and accidents, its disappointments, pains and stumbles, lie peacefully forgotten in the well of memory; and we wish somebody could have told us in some past trouble that the future contained for us a moment so good as this.

"Mademoiselle is in the garden," a servant informed him, and led the way through halls and *salons*, down steps running from the long window into a shaded green paradise. And then he heard a fresh voice that he seemed not to have heard for so long, and on hearing it only was his heart made aware how much he had missed it during the past age of privation.

"Ah, my cousin Armand!"

There was a young man dawdling at her feet in an attitude that sent the red blood to Armand's forehead. This was Bernard Francillon, his other and less sympathetic cousin. The young man jumped up, and measured him in a stare of insolent interrogation, and Marguerite, with a look of divine self-consciousness and a lovely blush, said, very softly: "So, Armand, you have let yourself be tamed, and you have actually forsaken your delightful den, I hear. How could you, my cousin? The cooking-stove, the fishing-rod, the easel, blouse, and velvet jacket,—all abandoned for the less interesting resources of our every-day existence!"

Her eyes and voice were full of arch protest, and her smile went to the troubled lad's head, more captivating than wine. "It was for your sake, Marguerite," he answered, timidly, in tones dropped to an unquiet murmur.

"Permit me, cousin, to retire for the moment," said Bernard, turning his back deliberately upon his disconcerted relative.

What was it in their exchanged looks, in their clasped hands, in Bernard's unconscious air of fond proprietorship, in Marguerite's half droop towards him of shy surrender, that carried to Armand the conviction

of fatal error? He watched his rival departing, and turned a blank face upon the radiant girl, whose delicious smile had all the eloquence and trouble of maiden's relinquished freedom. She met his white empty gaze with a glance more full and frank than the one she had just lifted so tenderly to Bernard Francillon. "I don't understand you, Armand. Why for my sake?"

"It was your father's error. He thought you loved me, and I, heaven help me! till now I thought so too," he breathed, in a despairing undertone, not able to remove his eyes from her surprised and delicately concerned face.

"Poor Armand! I am very sorry," was all she said, but the way in which she held her hand out to him was a mute admission of his miserable error. He lifted the little hand to his lips, and turned from her in silence.

The sun that had shone so brightly a moment ago was blotted from the earth, and the music of the birds was harsh discordance, as he wandered among the evening shadows of the woods. All things jarred upon his nerves, until night dropped a veil upon the horrible nakedness of his sorrow.

He felt he wore it upon his face for all eyes to see, and he thanked the darkness, as it sped over the starry heavens. Beyond the beautiful valley, where the river flowed, the spires and domes and bridges of Paris showed through the reddish glimmer of sunset as through a dusty light. Soon there would be noise and laughter upon the crowded boulevards, and a flow of carriages making for the theatres through the flaunting gas-flames; and happy lovers in defiant file would be driving towards the Bois. How often had he and Maurice watched them on foot, as they smoked their evening cigarette, and sighed or laughed as might be their mood. Would he ever have the heart to laugh at lovers again, or laugh at anything, he wondered drearily! And there was no one here to remind him that sorrow, like joy, is evanescent, and that all wounds are cured. *Tout lasse, tout casse, tout passe*,—even pain and broken hearts.

Here silence was almost palpable to the touch, like the darkness of Nature dropping into sleep. He turned his back upon Paris, and faced the dim country.

HANNAH LYNCH.

THE RUINS OF BAALBEK.

THE streets and houses of the city of Beyrout are still hushed in silence, as we step forth into the sharp night air from the Hôtel Bellevue for the head-quarters of the Beyrout and Damascus Diligence Company. The moon is full, and its pale glimmer enhances the almost unearthly stillness of the scene. A quivering streak of silver from its broken reflection lights up at intervals the dark blue waters of St. George's Bay, which elsewhere are buried in sombre shadow. Before us rise the mountains of Lebanon, their snow-capped summits towering ghostly in the subdued and hazy light. The occasional bark of a pariah dog, the shuffling tread of a slippered foot, or the shrill shriek of the watchman's whistle, are the only sounds besides our own which break upon the silence of the slumbering city. Only when we reach our destination are there any signs whatever of watchful activity. There, by the champing of bits and the rattle of harness; by the little knots of lazy natives who are hanging listlessly about in the faint hope of *baksheesh*; by the huge ungainly apparition in the middle of the courtyard, painted yellow and adorned with a cumbersome hood, like a four-wheeled monster with a night-cap on; by the few fussy officials on the steps of the office, still yawning and only half awake; by the dozen forms in European costume, the men with great coats muffled up to the chin, the women with veils and closely folded cloaks; by these and other outward tokens we can tell that the diligence for Damascus is about to start.

We climb up into our places on the *banquette*, followed by the driver and the guard, a couple of burly broad-shouldered men, with weather-worn

faces and with white *kuffiyehs* on their heads.

The driver skilfully takes in hand the six splendid Arab horses, three abreast, who are chafing impatiently to start; the iron gates of the yard are flung wide open; and, while the guard awakes unearthly echoes from his brazen horn through the silent night, we dash triumphantly through the gates, swing round to the right into the Place des Canons, and speed on our way towards Damascus punctually to the minute, as our watches are pointing to four o'clock in the morning.

The first faint streaks of early dawn are beginning to break in front of us to the east as we slowly wind our way up the zig-zag road into the heart of the mountain district; and the driver of the diligence, having his horses well in hand, now begins to look around him, taking stock of the passengers whom he has in charge. A broad, good-humoured smile overspreads his sunburnt face as he turns to us, and says by way of introduction, "Yankee Doodle!" His English vocabulary is extremely limited, but though a Syrian native, he is able to converse a little in the language of France. We explain to him therefore that we are not American, but English travellers; and with another merry twinkle he immediately responds in the only other English sentence at his command: "Good morning, have you used Pears' soap?"

At Jemhur, half way up the mountain-side, we halt to change horses at the end of our first stage; and as daylight has by this time thoroughly lighted up the scene, we are able to enjoy the marvellous prospect of the maritime plain which we have just left behind us.

As we remount to our places after our brief review, we notice that now we have three mules as wheelers, while three horses are still in front as leaders. We ask our friend the driver the meaning of this, and he answers with characteristic brevity and force, "Horses for speed, mules for steadiness." At each successive stage of our onward way the same arrangement recurs; and we can vouch by a very practical experience for the use and wisdom of this order of things. As a general rule everything goes on so smoothly that one fails to see the need of the mules; and one fancies that if they were replaced by horses progress might be more rapid and satisfactory. But upon one occasion when we were driving to Damascus, all the travellers on the diligence had excellent cause to thank the mules for their escape from danger. We had climbed the Lebanon Pass, and descended on the other side into the broad and fertile plain which separates the two parallel ranges of Lebanon and anti-Lebanon. We were spinning along in gallant style at the rate of about twelve miles an hour when, suddenly, an iron rivet came out from the bit of the off-side horse in front. In an instant the bit had fallen out of his mouth, the blinkers came off, and the high-spirited animal rose up on his hind legs and then came down again, with his teeth firmly fixed in the cheek of the middle horse beside him. Before one had scarcely had time to realise that anything unusual had occurred, the three horses were wildly plunging about, and, in the expressive language of the driver himself, had commenced "Eating one another up." The harness became hopelessly entangled; straps, traces, and tackling strained and snapped; the diligence swerved from side to side; and for a moment it appeared inevitable that we must go over the precipice. In that critical state of affairs the mules came to the rescue and saved us all from our imminent peril. Directly the horses commenced their pranks the three mules planted

their fore-feet firmly in front and their hind-feet slanting backwards, and, though the horses more than once lunged out savagely at them, kicking them in a desperate fashion, nothing in the world would induce them to move until the driver and guard had descended from the coach and succeeded in reducing the horses to order. This they did most effectually by plunging boldly in amongst them, and dealing blows into their faces with their brawny fists, as if they were fighting men. They then produced out of their pockets sundry pieces of string, with which they proceeded in the calmest fashion to tie up the broken harness. Fortunately the next stage was comparatively near at hand, and we managed to reach it without further accident.

At Shtaura, on the plain between the mountain ranges, travellers who are intending to visit Baalbek leave the Damascus coach. It is wise, if possible, to engage beforehand, either by letter or telegram, a carriage to take you on to the ruins. Otherwise you may find yourself left in the lurch, and either compelled to remain a night at Shtaura (where there is indeed one of the best hotels in Syria, called, doubtless out of compliment to England, the *Hôtel Victoria*) or else to put up with a wretched ramshackle conveyance, with broken springs, jibbing, half-starved horses, and an utterly incompetent Arab driver. Even if you have taken the precaution to secure your carriage beforehand, you must carefully examine the conveyance they bring you before you start on your way, for the best are but very second-rate articles and the owners are exorbitant and unprincipled rascals. The price usually asked for the return journey between Shtaura and Baalbek is 115 francs for a carriage to hold four persons; and the driver expects a *baksheesh* besides. If you are making a mere visit to Baalbek in the ordinary routine of sight-seeing you will probably spend but one whole day there. That is to say, you will

arrive about sunset on the day of your leaving Beyrout, devote the whole of the next day to the ruins, and leave about sunrise on the third day on your return journey to Shtaura, so as to catch the diligence for Damascus or for Beyrout, according to your plans. In this case you must see that the carriage and horses which you have engaged remain at Baalbek as long as you do; for, unless you are careful about the matter, you are in danger of finding yourself defrauded, the carriage having been taken back to Shtaura for a fresh fare, notwithstanding the contract which has been made with you. It is perhaps hardly necessary to observe that in such a case you would practically have no legal remedy whatever; for any appeal to Turkish law-courts would be so much waste of time and money. Therefore in this, as in all other matters of travel in Syria, you must be your own guardian, and keep a watchful eye on your conveyance, horses, and driver.

The road from Shtaura to Baalbek is, on the whole, good, though now and then one finds one's self uncomfortably jolted. The distance is somewhat over twenty miles through an almost perfectly level and easy district. Notwithstanding this, the drives usually occupy from four and a half to five hours. The first half of the way lies along the eastern base of the Lebanon range, past the large Moslem village of Mu'allaka, which is the seat of a *kaimakam*, or district-governor, and which joins the still larger Christian village of Zahleh, lying out of sight of the road to the left, and running up into a cleft of the mountain. For those who prefer to make the journey on horseback, an alternative road from Beyrout to Baalbek leads over a lovely portion of the Lebanon, passing directly through Zahleh itself. This route occupies three days, with halts for the night at Bukfeiya and at Zahleh, at both which places there are tolerably decent hotels. The path, though somewhat steep in places, is

nowhere difficult; and the glorious mountain views, the delightful atmosphere, and the romantic solitudes render this alternative route exceedingly enjoyable for those who are accustomed to the saddle.

About an hour after leaving Mu'allaka we pass on our left hand Kerak Nuh, a village nestling on the mountain side, and claiming to derive its name from the patriarch Noah, whose tomb is even shown to the confiding traveller. To judge from the dimensions of this tomb Noah must indeed have lived at a time when "there were giants upon the earth," and moreover he must have belonged to the race himself, for the grave in which he is said to have been interred measures no less than two hundred and ten feet in length!

Across the valley, at the foot of Anti-Lebanon, is Neby Shit, where native tradition locates the burial place of Seth; and further up in the mountains, towards Damascus, stands Kabr Habil, or the tomb of Abel; so that the whole of this district abounds in legendary records connecting it with the earliest ages of humanity.

At Temnin, a mile or two beyond Kerak Nuh, we reach the half-way house between Shtaura and Baalbek, and while we halt for a few minutes to breathe our horses we may, with the aid of good field-glasses, take our first view of the ruins towards which we are journeying, and which lie away in the distance to the north-east on the further side of the plain.

This plain, which we now proceed to cross, is familiar to classical students under the name of Coele-Syria, a title derived from the Greek word *κῶλος*, "hollow," because it stretches as a hollow cleft between the mountain ranges. There is little doubt that this Greek appellation was merely the translation of its native name; and that anciently, as at the present day, it was known in Syria as *Beka'a*, the Arabic for "a cleft." Here then have we not the clue to the name of

Baalbek itself, the origin of which has so strangely puzzled all Syrian authorities? It is well known that the Phœnicians of old were in the habit of erecting shrines and temples to Baal, each of which was regarded as a centre of worship for the whole district around the place where it was built. This place was then called by the name of the district, with the prefix "Baal" before it. Thus we read in the Bible of Baal-Hermon, Baal-Peor, Baal-Hazor, Baal-Zephon, and other similar names. The mightiest and most important of all these temples was that which was erected in the plain of the Beka'a, and which caused its site to be known as *Baal-Beka'a*. The final syllable dropped out of this name, in all probability in the course of its progress through the Greek literature, there being no *Ain* (E) in the Greek vocabulary. Thus we are left with its modern form, *Baalbek*. I am aware that one objection may be urged against this theory; for the *k* in Baalbek is the Arabic *Kaph*, whereas that in *Beka'a* is the guttural *Koph*. But innumerable instances might be cited in which the guttural letter of a name has become transformed in the course of time into the corresponding soft letter; though it is, I believe, doubtful whether examples of the converse mutation are to be found. We may, therefore, I think, assume that the correct explanation of the origin of the word Baalbek is that which is also the most simple, and that we have here the true solution of that which has so curiously exercised the minds of philological inquirers.

We have said that the region of the Beka'a was that which was selected by the Phœnicians for the erection of their principal and most splendid shrine. And the reason for this is apparent. The very names of the places already mentioned,—Kabr Habil, Neby Shit, and Kerak Nuh—show that the whole of the district surrounding the Beka'a was the home and sanctuary of their most sacred associations. It would seem therefore that the Phœni-

cians must have held the antediluvian patriarchs in as true a reverence as did the Israelites themselves, or, in other words, that they must have traced their descent from the same common ancestry. Furthermore, this common ancestry apparently ended with Noah; for there are no traces of any of the descendants of Shem to be found in the names of places in this locality. The Phœnicians were a portion of that horde of Hamitic tribes which, about the twenty-fourth century B.C., had been expelled from their homes on the Persian Gulf by the invasion of the Japhetic Aryans, and had swept down upon that country bordering on the Mediterranean, which received in consequence the generic name of Canaan. This historical fact we know from other sources as well as the Bible; but though secular records inform us of the three great divisions of humanity into the Semitic, Hamitic, and Japhetic races, they are altogether silent upon the common origin of the three. And here, with regard to two at any rate of these races, we have a practical confirmation of the truth of Holy Scripture when we find the Hamitic race of Phœnicians revering the memory of Abel, Seth, and Noah, patriarchs also venerated by the Semitic Israelites. Having thus cleared away the difficulties surrounding the origin of the name of Baalbek, let us turn to the ruins themselves.

On the outskirts of the modern village our attention is arrested by the quarries whence the stones of Baalbek were hewn, and which lie on the right hand of the road from Shtaura. In the midst of these quarries there lies one stone, hewn and fashioned with exquisite accuracy, almost severed from the solid rock, and apparently waiting to be carried away to its destined place in the walls of the great Phœnician temple of Baal. There it has remained in silent grandeur for upwards probably of three thousand years, suggesting to the thoughtful observer many interesting and curious

reflections. How long was that stone in process of excavation and fashioning? How many human hands were employed upon the work? What implements were used for the gigantic toil? How was it to have been removed from the quarry to its appointed place? How raised to its position when once carried there? Why, after all the labour which had been bestowed upon it, was it left at last in the quarries? Could we discover the answer to this last question, we should probably learn of some great crisis in the world's history, some mighty incursion, some decisive battle, some irrevocable overthrow of a powerful nation. For it is evident that the work was abandoned suddenly, while yet remaining in an incomplete condition; and there is no explanation so feasible or probable as that of conquest by a foreign foe.

But how shall we exhibit to the ordinary reader the marvellous proportions of this colossal stone? Roughly speaking, and in round figures, we may say that it is seventy feet long, fourteen feet broad, and fourteen feet high. Now what does this mean? Imagine a room fourteen feet square and seven feet high,—a very fair-sized cottage room. Imagine a house with ten such rooms in it, five on the ground floor in a row, and five on the first floor above. Imagine this house to be one solid block of stone,—and we have the stone in the Baalbek quarry! It has been computed to weigh at least fifteen hundred tons; and a further calculation has been made that it would require forty thousand strong men, pulling their hardest in the same direction, to move that stone a quarter of an inch in an hour!

Such being the case, one will naturally exclaim, "No wonder that that stone was never removed from its place!" But the marvel is that in the very walls of the great temple of Baal there actually are, at this very day, stones almost of the same dimensions, which have been removed from that very quarry, have been carried over a quarter of a mile, and have been raised

into their positions thirty-five feet above the level of the ground! There are three such stones, measuring respectively sixty-four feet, sixty-three and a half feet, and sixty-three feet in length; and every one of exactly the same breadth and height as the stone which we have been discussing—that is to say, fourteen feet each way. More than this, there are fifteen other stones, each thirty feet long and of the same transverse section as the larger blocks, which have also been hewn, removed, and raised into position in a precisely similar way. Further than this, though no mortar or cement has been used to join them together, so exquisitely have they been carved, and so accurately placed into their allotted positions, that in more than one case it is almost impossible to discern with the naked eye where one stone ends and another begins, nor can the blade of a penknife be inserted between the two.

As one gazes at these colossal monuments of human intellect, industry, skill, and perseverance, the brain becomes almost bewildered at the thought of the daring conception and indomitable energy which must have characterised those master minds under whose direction such great achievements were accomplished. The seven wonders of the world! Earth has never witnessed any human creation more wonderful in its way than the Cyclopean wall of the Phœnician temple of Baalbek.

The ruins at Baalbek, both Phœnician and Greek, have so often been described that it is not now my purpose to consider them in detail. But there is one particular feature connected with them which has hitherto apparently escaped the notice of explorers, and which seems to me of the highest importance. Not only is it possible that in this feature we have a clue to the origin of Baalbek itself, but also it may reveal to us the source from which the Phœnicians obtained their architectural knowledge and skill.

Underneath the vast platform upon which the great Greek temple of the Sun was built are very remarkable sub-structural passages and chambers. From a cursory inspection these passages and chambers would appear to be nothing more than a series of vaults, constructed for the purpose of forming a basement upon which could be placed a raised platform, to give the temples a more exalted position. But a more minute examination shows that the vaulted arches which cover these substructural buildings are of a very much later period than the passages and chambers themselves. The arches are clearly Greco-Roman in date, and were without doubt constructed for the purpose mentioned above; but they evidently were no part of the original design of the passages and chambers which they cover. These latter are constructed of enormous blocks of stone, of a very different style from the stones of the arches, and there is no difficulty whatever in tracing throughout the exact places where the later additions commenced. Thus it would appear that originally these substructural erections, which are not subterranean, were portions of a great hypaethral temple; in their ground-plan they remind one irresistibly of some of the temples of Egypt, while their age appears to equal at least that of any other part of the ruins of Baalbek, not even excepting the colossal wall. Here, then, we have an indication of some connection between Egyptian and Phœnician architecture. It has long been a theory that the Phœnicians as well as the Greeks were indebted to Egypt for the first principles of their architectural knowledge. Curiously enough, at Baalbek itself there is even down to the present day a local tradition among the natives that Egyptian priests superintended the construction of the first temple in the place, and that it was under their direction that the Phœnicians were taught to build.

Several minor details serve to corroborate this theory. For example,

as Lord Lindsay pointed out in 1838, "The orb with wings and serpents, precisely the same as that which figures on every Egyptian temple," is to be seen among the ruins of the greater temple. At least one column with the Egyptian lotus-leaved capital is still standing within the beautiful temple of Jupiter; and a careful investigation would doubtless reveal many other points of similitude. True, it may be urged that, in both the instances quoted, the evidences of Egyptian influence belong to the Greek and not to the Phœnician remains; but this is a small matter, for there can be little doubt that most of the materials used in the construction of the Greek temples came from the ruins of the earlier Phœnician buildings, and that even the Corinthian capitals and the purely Grecian carvings were wrought upon the stones which already existed there. The very fact, moreover, of the presence of Egyptian work occurring here and there in the midst of the Grecian is of itself a strong indication that these Egyptian remains were no part of the original designs of the Greek architects, and that the sole reason of their existence is that they were utilised by the builders because they were ready to hand.

There are good grounds therefore for conjecturing from internal evidence that the Phœnician temples at Baalbek were at least inspired by Egyptian influence, if not actually built by Egyptian architects as the local tradition would have us believe. And this internal evidence is very remarkably confirmed by the historical records of the ancient Egyptians which are now familiar to us through the decipherment of the hieroglyphic and hieratic inscriptions.

From these we find that during the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties in Egypt, the most powerful and warlike of all the races of Syria was that of the Khitas, better known to us under the name of Hittites. The Khitas or Hittites, called also *Khatti*

on the Assyrian inscriptions, inhabited the chain of the Amanus and the valley of the Orontes, their principal city in the latter district being Kadesh-on-Orontes, as Carchemish was in the former. Kadesh-on-Orontes, corrupted in the authorised version of the Bible into Tahtimhodshi (2 Sam. xxiv. 6), has been unequivocally identified by Major Conder (*Heth and Moab*, chap. i.) with Tell Neby Mendeh, a remarkable mound about fifty miles north of Baalbek. This ancient city, which was considered the key to the whole valley of the Orontes, was approached from the south through the great plain of the Beka'a, in which, as we have seen, is situated Baalbek.

Now the annals of the temple of Karnak inform us that Thothmes III., the mighty monarch of the eighteenth dynasty, penetrated into the mountain districts of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, containing between them the fertile plain of *Isahi*, that is, the Beka'a. This plain of *Isahi* was subdued by Thothmes, who exacted from the inhabitants a vast tribute of wine, wheat, cattle, honey, and iron, an account of which is fully depicted on the walls of Karnak. The following year he took by assault the town of Kadesh-on-Orontes. So important and decisive was considered this capture that, on receiving the tidings of it, all the Assyrian princes beyond the Euphrates at once hastened to offer their submission to Thothmes, who carried off to Egypt the sons and brothers of the chiefs, where they were retained as hostages at the court of Thebes. The terms in which these incidents are described in the annals of the temple of Karnak clearly indicate the overwhelming importance attached by the Egyptians to this victorious campaign of Thothmes III.

Passing on to the nineteenth dynasty we find another important expedition being made by the Egyptian army through Syria during the reign of the first monarch Seti, with the express object of crushing the power of the Khitas, who had become the

most formidable antagonists of Egypt. It was not until after a long and desperate conflict that the Egyptians succeeded in penetrating into the country of their foe, and carrying by assault the city of Kadesh. At the conclusion of this war a treaty of peace was concluded between Seti and Mautnur, the King of the Khitas, the latter nation being allowed to preserve their independence, they undertaking on their part never again to molest the Egyptian provinces or encourage rebellion against the authority of Pharaoh.

This undertaking appears to have been faithfully kept by the Khitas during the remaining years of Seti's reign; but soon after the succession of his son and successor, the renowned Rameses II., they again put themselves at the head of a general rebellion against Egypt, in which all the provinces of Western Asia combined. A complete list of the States who thus joined in an alliance against the Egyptian power has been preserved in the annals of Rameses; and thence we learn that a vast and formidable army gathered together in Northern Syria, and threatened not only to wrest the Asiatic provinces from Pharaoh, but even to invade the country of Egypt itself. In order to prevent this Rameses assembled the whole of his military force, and, traversing the lands of Palestine and Phœnicia, marched along the plain of the Beka'a northwards, finally encountering the mighty army of his enemies in the neighbourhood of Kadesh. After falling into an ambushade, in which they narrowly escaped being cut to pieces, the Egyptians achieved a crushing victory, completely routing the opposing forces, and taking Kadesh-on-Orontes by storm. The personal heroism of Rameses himself was celebrated in the famous epic of Pentaur, a poet attached to his court; and this epic, together with the subsequent treaty of peace, is still to be seen inscribed on the outer wall of the temple at

Karnak. The Ramesseum at Thebes and the noted temple at Abu Simbel, or Ipsamboul, are also covered with hieroglyphic inscriptions devoted to a detailed account of this splendid and important victory. From these inscriptions we gather that Rameses was determined to immortalise to the utmost of his power the achievements which he had wrought. From them we further learn that an enormous number of prisoners of war were captured, and that the whole district around was utterly subdued.

What then can be more reasonable than to suppose that, in the very region of his marvellous exploits, and with the forced labour of the innumerable prisoners whom he had captured, and the peaceful inhabitants whom he had reduced to servile subjection, the Egyptian monarch should cause a monument to be erected,—a monument to serve the threefold purpose of perpetuating his fame, warning the vanquished against any further attempt at revolt, and employing the host of captives?

This may, we say, account for the almost unmistakable evidence of the presence of Egyptian influence in the most ancient portions of the ruins of Baalbek. Beyond this conjecture, however, it is impossible to go; for we are destitute of any direct historical record on the point, and, moreover, so little really remains of the mighty temple beyond the Cyclopean walls and the substructural passages, that we can have but little light thrown on our investigations in that direction. At any rate, the question is of the highest interest, and we trust that future explorations and investigations may further elucidate the origin of Baalbek.

It may be objected, and very fairly, that if these ruins had been the work of the Egyptians we ought to have found in them a closer resemblance to the other remains of Egyptian architecture of the period which are existing on the banks of the Nile; such as hieroglyphic inscriptions and figures,

statues of Rameses himself, and so forth. But against this it may be urged with every appearance of probability that the operations commenced under the direction of the Egyptians were never really completed, nor indeed that they advanced much beyond mere foundation-work. Such records as we possess of the history of the succeeding period suggest that the direct hold of Egypt over Syria was but of comparatively short duration; and that consequently the nations which had been brought into captivity and forced labour soon regained their freedom. In this case we can well understand that, having acquired an insight into the mysteries of architecture, and having instinctively conceived an aptitude for building, those who had commenced the colossal operations under the pressure of compulsion should continue, after the withdrawal of the foreign taskmaster, to carry on the work on their own account, transforming that which had originally been intended as an Egyptian monument into a temple for their own god Baal. If this be so, we have in all probability at Baalbek not only the principal and most wonderful of all Phœnician buildings, but also the foremost in point of time.

A word must be said upon one question which must naturally arise in every one's mind with respect to the transport of the colossal stones. How could they possibly have been removed from the quarries to their appointed place? How raised from the ground into their present position?

By way of solution to this mystery many suggestions have been offered, but none of them can be considered entirely satisfactory. Such theories as those of inclined planes, rollers, and such-like methods, are well known to all. One ingenious surmiser has hazarded the opinion that elephants were common in Syria in those days, and that a score or two of these animals could have managed the business by the aid of ropes of raw cow-hides. But no theory that has

yet been started is sufficient of itself to solve the difficulty ; though it is, of course, not improbable that one or another of the methods suggested may have been utilised in combination with other means. About four years ago, however, a couple of Druses from the Hauran described to me a remarkable machine which had been discovered, according to their account, at Salkhah, at the south-eastern base of the Jebel-ed-Druse, or Druse Mountain, celebrated by the Psalmist as "the Hill of Bashan." At the time I did not unfortunately realise the importance of the discovery which these Druses had made. But after due reflection and consultation with others, I came to the conclusion that nothing less than an original machine for the hoisting and conveyance of enormous blocks of stone had been brought to light, and that, if it could be produced, one could see with one's own eyes a practical example of the solution of that which has so long been a mystery. The information which I received was necessarily vague and indefinite, for the Druses had no idea that they had made any important discovery ; but from what I could make out, the principle of the machine was of a marvelously simple nature. I have already described it to the best of my power in *Murray's Handbook to Syria and Palestine*. It appears to have been a gigantic lever of the first order, the fulcrum of which was supported by a huge tripodal pedestal. The tripod and the beam were each composed of a great number of bundles of rough logs of wood (probably of the silver poplar, which still abounds in the neighbourhood of Damascus, and the trunks of which are straight), stout, strong, and seasoned, and clamped firmly together by iron bands and rivets. It is evident that such a machine could be made strong enough for any required purpose by the simple addition of a sufficient number of these wooden logs or beams, each secured to the others by these stout iron clamps. The lever worked on a pivot on the

top of the tripodal support, and was so arranged that the arms had a horizontal as well as a vertical motion. At the end of one arm of the lever was a series of strong iron claws to catch the stone ; at the end of the other, an enormous cage. When the stone was required to be raised from the ground this cage was simply filled with smaller stones, until their united weight counterbalanced the weight of the stone required to be raised. As soon as the stone was lifted the necessary height from the ground, it was pulled round horizontally, either through an angle of one hundred and eighty degrees if it was a question of transport, or above its required position if it was a case of building. Then it would be lowered into its place by the simple expedient of removing the stones from the cage. This mechanical power was of a very primitive but ingenious character, and it answered its purpose admirably.

Of course it must be understood that the above description is in a great measure conjectural ; for I never saw the machine myself nor, so far as I know, has any European examined it. Indeed, from the Druses' account, even when discovered it must have been in a fragmentary and dilapidated condition, and even before the circumstance was reported to me at all the inhabitants had already begun to break it up for the purpose of using the beams for the roofs of their houses and availing themselves of the iron. From some travellers who have visited Salkhah this year I learn that all traces of it have disappeared. It is possible that my theory may itself be wrong, and that after all the machine may have had nothing to do with the raising and conveyance of stones ; but several mechanical engineers to whom I have mentioned the subject consider it not only possible, but highly probable that it was by means of such an appliance as this that the difficulty presented even by the Cyclopean stones of Baalbek may have been surmounted. All these

stones, it should be remembered, as well as almost all the stones of any great size to be found throughout the length and breadth of Syria, have holes cut in their sides as if for the insertion of such claws as I have spoken of; and there seems to be little doubt that these holes were cut for the express purpose of grappling the stones.

One final thought is suggested by these ruins. In contemplating any grand relic of heathen worship, whether it be the Parthenon at Athens or the colossal structures at Baalbek, I for my part feel myself moved as truly to reverence and awe as when gazing upon St. Peter's at Rome or any of our stately Christian cathedrals. In every case, it appears to me, the motive power has been the same. True, the Christian architects have had the advantage of greater illumination to aid their creations; but none the less really were the temples of old the outcome of the endeavours of the human mind to reach out towards the Divine. Consciously or unconsciously, the Phœnician of old was stretching out towards the infinite when he designed and executed his Cyclopean structures; just as, in later days, the Athenian was obeying his instinctive yearning after the ideal of

Divinity when he elaborated the sublime details of the Parthenon.

I choose the Phœnician and the Greek out of all the other nations of antiquity, partly because we find at Baalbek noble specimens of the work of both, and partly because they were the representatives of two opposite expressions of this human longing for the Divine. The Greek, as every one knows, introduced a new era of artistic creation into the world when he conceived the idea of aspiring towards Divinity by the culture and execution of the beautiful. The Phœnician lived and laboured before this conception had dawned upon the human mind; and his ideal was therefore realised by the massive and stupendous alone. At Baalbek we have, therefore, in the Phœnician portion of the ruins, the grandest monument now in existence of the reaching out of the finite towards the infinite in the creation of *mass*, as distinct from *beauty*. Such a monument, so considered, demands our deepest respect and reverence, even though, through the want of a higher revelation, the worship for which those temples were erected be repulsive to our instincts of right and truth.

HASKETT SMITH.

MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

SEPTEMBER, 1892.

DON ORSINO.¹

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD.

CHAPTER XX.

It was to be foreseen that Orsino and Maria Consuelo would see each other more often and more intimately now than ever before. Apart from the strong mutual attraction which drew them nearer and nearer together, there were many new circumstances which rendered Orsino's help almost indispensable to his friend. The details of her installation in the apartment she had chosen were many; there was much to be thought of, and there were enormous numbers of things to be bought, almost each needing judgment and discrimination in the choice. Had the two wanted reasonable excuses for meeting very often they had them ready to their hand. But neither of them were under any illusion, and neither cared to affect that peculiar form of self-forgiveness which finds good reasons always for doing what is always pleasant. Orsino, indeed, never pressed his services, and was careful not to be seen too often in public with Maria Consuelo by the few acquaintances who were in town. Nor did Madame d'Aranjuez actually ask his help at every turn, any more than she made any difficulty about accepting it. There was a tacit understanding between them which did away with all necessity for inventing excuses on the one hand, or for the affectation of fearing to inconvenience

Orsino on the other. During some time, however, the subjects which both knew to be dangerous were avoided, with an unspoken mutual consent for which Maria Consuelo was more grateful than for all the trouble Orsino was giving himself on her account. She fancied, perhaps, that he had at last accepted the situation, and his society gave her too much happiness to allow of her asking whether his discretion would or could last long.

It was an anomalous relation which bound them together, as is often the case at some period during the development of a passion, and most often when the absence of obstacles makes the growth of affection slow and regular. It was a period during which a new kind of intimacy began to exist, as far removed from the half-serious, half-jesting intercourse of earlier days as it was from the ultimate happiness to which all those who love look forward with equal trust, although few ever come near it and fewer still can ever quite reach it. It was outwardly a sort of frank comradeship which took a vast deal for granted on both sides for the mere sake of escaping analysis, a condition in which each understood all that the other said, while neither quite knew what was in the other's heart, a state in which both were pleased to dwell for a time, as though preferring

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to prolong a sure if imperfect happiness rather than risk one moment of it for the hope of winning a life-long joy. It was a time during which mere friendship reached an artificially perfect beauty, like a summer-fruit grown under glass in winter, which in thoroughly unnatural conditions attains a development almost impossible even where unhelped nature is most kind. Both knew, perhaps, that it could not last, but neither wished it checked, and neither liked to think of the moment when it must either begin to wither by degrees, or be suddenly absorbed into a greater and more dangerous growth.

At that time they were able to talk fluently upon the nature of the human heart and the durability of great affections. They propounded the problems of the world and discussed them between the selection of a carpet and the purchase of a table. They were ready at any moment to turn from the deepest conversation to the consideration of the merest detail, conscious that they could instantly take up the thread of their talk. They could separate the major proposition from the minor, and the deduction from both, by a lively argument concerning the durability of a stuff or the fitness of a piece of furniture, and they came back each time with renewed and refreshed interest to the consideration of matters little less grave than the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. That their conclusions were not always logical nor even very sensible has little to do with the matter. On the contrary, the discovery of a flaw in their own reasoning was itself a reason for opening the question again at their next meeting.

At first their conversation was of general things, including the desirability of glory for its own sake, the immortality of the soul, and the principles of architecture. Orsino was often amazed to find himself talking, and, as he fancied, talking well, upon

subjects of which he had hitherto supposed with some justice that he knew nothing. By and by they fell upon literature and dissected the modern novel with the keen zest of young people who seek to learn the future secrets of their own lives from vivid descriptions of the lives of others. Their knowledge of the modern novel was not so limited as their acquaintance with many other things less amusing, if more profitable, and they worked the vein with lively energy and mutual satisfaction.

Then, as always, came the important move. They began to talk of love. The interest ceased to be objective or in any way vicarious and was transferred directly to themselves.

These steps are not, I think, to be ever thought of as stages in the development of character in man or woman. They are phases in the intercourse of man and woman. Clever people know them well and know how to produce them at will. The end may or may not be love, but an end of some sort is inevitable. According to the persons concerned, according to circumstances, according to the amount of available time, the progression from general subjects to the discussion of love, with self-application of the conclusions, more or less sincere, may occupy an hour, a month, or a year. Love is the one subject which ultimately attracts those not too old to talk about it, and those who consider that they have reached such an age are few.

In the case of Orsino and Maria Consuelo, neither of the two was making any effort to lead up to a certain definite result, for both felt a real dread of reaching that point which is ever afterwards remembered as the last moment of hardly sustained friendship and the first of something stronger and too often less happy. Orsino was inexperienced, but Maria Consuelo was quite conscious of the tendency in a fixed direction. Whether she had made up her mind or not, she tried as skilfully as she could to

retard the movement, for she was very happy in the present and probably feared the first stirring of her own ardently passionate nature.

As for Orsino, indeed, his inexperience was relative. He was anxious to believe that he was only her friend, and pretended to his own conscience that he could not explain the frequency with which the words "I love you" presented themselves. The desire to speak them was neither a permanent impulse of which he was always conscious nor a sudden strong emotion like a temptation, giving warning of itself by a few heart-beats before it reached its strength. The words came to his lips so naturally and unexpectedly that he often wondered how he saved himself from pronouncing them. It was impossible for him to foresee when they would crave utterance. At last he began to fancy that they rang in his mind without a reason and without a wish on his part to speak them, as a perfectly indifferent tune will ring in the ear for days so that one cannot get rid of it.

Maria Consuelo had not intended to spend September and October altogether in Rome. She had supposed that it would be enough to choose her apartment and give orders to some person about the furnishing of it to her taste, and that after that she might go to the seaside until the heat should be over, coming up to the city from time to time as occasion required. But she seemed to have changed her mind. She did not even suggest the possibility of going away.

She generally saw Orsino in the afternoon. He found no difficulty in making time to see her, whenever he could be useful, but his own business naturally occupied all the earlier part of the day. As a rule, therefore, he called between half-past four and five, and so soon as it was cool enough they went together to the Palazzo Barberini to see what progress the upholsterers were making and to consider matters of taste. The great half-furnished rooms, with the big windows overlook-

ing the little garden before the palace, were pleasant to sit in and to wander in during the hot September afternoons. The pair were not often quite alone, even for a quarter of an hour, the place being full of workmen who came and went, passed and repassed, as their occupations required, often asking for orders and probably needing more supervision than Maria Consuelo bestowed upon them.

On a certain evening late in September the two were together in the large drawing-room. Maria Consuelo was tired and was leaning back in a deep seat, her hands folded upon her knee, watching Orsino as he slowly paced the carpet, crossing and recrossing in his short walk, his face constantly turned towards her. It was excessively hot. The air was sultry with thunder, and though it was past five o'clock the windows were still closely shut to keep out the heat. A clear, soft light filled the room, not reflected from a burning pavement, but from grass and splashing water.

They had been talking of a chimney-piece which Maria Consuelo wished to have placed in the hall. The style of what she wanted suggested the sixteenth century, Henry the Second of France, Diana of Poitiers, and the durability of the affections. The transition from fireplaces to true love had been accomplished with comparative ease, the result of daily practice and experience. It is worth noting, for the benefit of the young, that furniture is an excellent subject for conversation for that very reason, nothing being simpler than to go in three minutes from a table to an epoch, from an epoch to an historical person, and from that person to his or her love-story. A young man would do well to associate the life of some famous lover or celebrated and unhappy beauty with each style of woodwork and upholstery. It is always convenient. But if he has not the necessary preliminary knowledge he may resort to a stratagem.

"What a comfortable chair!" says

he, as he deposits his hat on the floor and sits down.

"Do you like comfortable chairs?"

"Of course. Fancy what life was in the days of stiff wooden seats, when you had to carry a cushion about with you. You know the sort of thing—twelfth century, Francesca da Rimini and all that."

"Poor Francesca!"

If she does not say "Poor Francesca!" as she probably will, you can say it yourself, very feelingly and in a different tone, after a short pause. The one kiss which cost two lives makes the story particularly useful. And then the ice is broken. If Paolo and Francesca had not been murdered, would they have loved each other for ever? As nobody knows what they would have done, you can assert that they would have been faithful or not, according to your taste, humour or personal intentions. Then you can talk about the husband, whose very hasty conduct contributed so materially to the shortness of the story. If you wish to be thought jealous, you say he was quite right; if you desire to seem generous, you say with equal conviction that he was quite wrong. And so forth. Get to generalities as soon as possible in order to apply them to your own case.

Orsino and Maria Consuelo were the guileless victims of furniture, neither of them being acquainted with the method just set forth for the instruction of the innocent. They fell into their own trap and wondered how they had got from mantelpieces to hearts in such an incredibly short time.

"It is quite possible to love twice," Orsino was saying.

"That depends upon what you mean by love," answered Maria Consuelo, watching him with half-closed eyes.

Orsino laughed. "What I mean by love? I suppose I mean very much what other people mean by it,—or a little more," he added, and the slight change in his voice pleased her.

"Do you think that any two under-

stand the same thing when they speak of love?" she asked.

"We two might," he answered, resuming his indifferent tone. "After all, we have talked so much together during the last month that we ought to understand each other."

"Yes," said Maria Consuelo. "And I think we do," she added thoughtfully.

"Then why should we think differently about the same thing? But I am not going to try and define love. It is not easily defined, and I am not clever enough." He laughed again. "There are many illnesses which I cannot define, but I know that one may have them twice."

"There are others which one can only have once,—dangerous ones too."

"I know it. But that has nothing to do with the argument."

"I think it has, if this is an argument at all."

"No. Love is not enough like an illness; it is quite the contrary. It is a recovery from an unnatural state, that of not loving. One may fall into that state and recover from it more than once."

"What a sophism!"

"Why do you say that? Do you think that not to love is the normal condition of mankind?"

Maria Consuelo was silent, still watching him.

"You have nothing to say," he continued, stopping and standing before her. "There is nothing to be said. A man or woman who does not love is in an abnormal state. When he or she falls in love it is a recovery. One may recover so long as the heart has enough vitality. Admit it, for you must. It proves that any properly constituted person may love twice, at least."

"There is an idea of faithlessness in it, nevertheless," said Maria Consuelo, thoughtfully. "Or if it is not faithless, it is fickle. It is not the same to one's self to love twice. One respects one's self less."

"I cannot believe that."

"We all ought to believe it. Take

a case as an instance. A woman loves a man with all her heart, to the point of sacrificing very much for him. He loves her in the same way. In spite of the strongest opposition, they agree to be married. On the very day of the marriage he is taken from her,—for ever,—loving her as he has always loved her, and as he would always have loved her had he lived. What would such a woman feel, if she found herself forgetting such a love as that after two or three years, for another man? Do you think she would respect herself more or less? Do you think she would have the right to call herself a faithful woman?"

Orsino was silent for a moment, seeing that she meant herself by the example. She, indeed, had only told him that her husband had been killed, but Spicca had once said of her that she had been married to a man who had never been her husband.

"A memory is one thing; real life is quite another," said Orsino at last, resuming his walk.

"And to be faithful cannot possibly mean to be faithless," answered Maria Consuelo in a low voice.

She rose and went to one of the windows. She must have wished to hide her face, for the outer blinds and the glass casement were both shut and she could see nothing but the green light that struck the painted wood. Orsino went to her side.

"Shall I open the window?" he asked in a constrained voice.

"No, not yet. I thought I could see out."

Still she stood where she was, her face almost touching the pane, one small white hand resting upon the glass, the fingers moving restlessly.

"You meant yourself just now," said Orsino softly.

She neither spoke nor moved, but her face grew pale. Then he fancied that there was a hardly perceptible movement of her head, the merest shade of an inclination. He leaned a little towards her, resting against the marble sill of the window.

"And you meant something more ——" he began to say. Then he stopped short.

His heart was beating hard and the hot blood throbbed in his temples, his lips closed tightly and his breathing was audible.

Maria Consuelo turned her head, glanced at him quickly, and instantly looked back at the smooth glass before her and at the green light on the shutters without. He was scarcely conscious that she had moved. In love, as in a storm at sea, matters grow very grave in a few moments.

"You meant that you might still ——" Again he stopped. The words would not come.

He fancied that she would not speak. She could not, any more than she could have left his side at that moment. The air was very sultry even in the cool, closed room. The green light on the shutters darkened suddenly. Then a far distant peal of thunder rolled its echoes slowly over the city. Still neither moved from the window.

"If you could——" Orsino's voice was low and soft, but there was something strangely overwrought in the nervous quality of it. It was not hesitation any longer that made him stop.

"Could you love me?" he asked. He thought he spoke aloud. When he had spoken, he knew that he had whispered the words.

His face was colourless. He heard a short, sharp breath, drawn like a gasp. The small white hand fell from the window and gripped his own with sudden, violent strength. Neither spoke. Another peal of thunder, nearer and louder, shook the air. Then Orsino heard the quick-drawn breath again, and the white hand went nervously to the fastening of the window. Orsino opened the casement and thrust back the blinds. There was a vivid flash, more thunder, and a gust of stifling wind. Maria Consuelo leaned far out, looking up, and a few great drops of rain began to fall.

The storm burst and the cold rain poured down furiously, wetting the two white faces at the window. Maria Consuelo drew back a little, and Orsino leaned against the open casement, watching her. It was as though the single pressure of their hands had crushed out the power of speech for a time.

For weeks they had talked daily together during many hours. They could not foresee that at the great moment there would be nothing left for them to say. The rain fell in torrents and the gusty wind rose and buffeted the face of the great palace with roaring strength, to sink very suddenly an instant later in the steadily rushing noise of the water, springing up again without warning, rising and falling, falling and rising, like a great sobbing breath. The wind and the rain seemed to be speaking for the two who listened to them.

Orsino watched Maria Consuelo's face, not scrutinising it, nor realising very much whether it were beautiful or not, nor trying to read the thoughts that were half expressed in it—not thinking at all, indeed, but only loving it wholly and in every part for the sake of the woman herself, as he had never dreamed of loving any one or anything.

At last Maria Consuelo turned very slowly and looked into his eyes. The passionate sadness faded out of the features, the faint colour rose again, the full lips relaxed, the smile that came was full of a happiness that seemed almost divine.

"I cannot help it," she said.

"Can I?"

"Truly?"

Her hand was lying on the marble ledge. Orsino laid his own upon it, and both trembled a little. She understood more than any words could have told her.

"For how long?" she asked.

"For all our lives now, and for all our life hereafter."

He raised her hand to his lips,

bending his head, and then he drew her from the window, and they walked slowly up and down the great room.

"It is very strange," she said presently, in a low voice.

"That I should love you?"

"Yes. Where were we an hour ago? What is become of that old time, that was an hour ago?"

"I have forgotten, dear; that was in the other life."

"The other life! Yes—how unhappy I was—there, by that window, a hundred years ago!"

She laughed softly, and Orsino smiled as he looked down at her. "Are you happy now?"

"Do not ask me,—how could I tell you?"

"Say it to yourself, love; I shall see it in your dear face."

"Am I not saying it?"

Then they were silent again, walking side by side, their arms locked and pressing one another.

It began to dawn upon Orsino that a great change had come into his life, and he thought of the consequences of what he was doing. He had not said that he was happy, but in the first moment he had felt it more than she. The future, however, would not be like the present, and could not be a perpetual continuation of it. Orsino was not at all of a romantic disposition, and the practical side of things was always sure to present itself to his mind very early in any affair. It was a part of his nature and by no means hindered him from feeling deeply and loving sincerely. But it shortened his moments of happiness.

"Do you know what this means to you and me?" he asked, after a time.

Maria Consuelo started very slightly and looked up at him.

"Let us think of to-morrow—to-morrow," she said. Her voice trembled a little.

"Is it so hard to think of?" asked Orsino, fearing lest he had displeased her.

"Very hard," she answered in a low voice.

"Not for me. Why should it be? If anything can make to-day more complete, it is to think that to-morrow will be more perfect, and the next day still more, and so on, each day better than the one before it."

Maria Consuelo shook her head. "Do not speak of it," she said.

"Will you not love me to-morrow?" Orsino asked. The light in his face told how little earnestly he asked the question, but she turned upon him quickly.

"Do you doubt yourself, that you should doubt me?" There was a ring of terror in the words that startled him as he heard them.

"Beloved, no—how can you think I meant it?"

"Then do not say it." She shivered a little, and bent down her head.

"No, I will not. But,—dear,—do you know where we are?"

"Where we are?" she repeated, not understanding.

"Yes, where we are. This was to have been your home this year."

"Was to have been?" A frightened look came into her face.

"It will not be, now. Your home is not in this house."

Again she shook her head, turning her face away. "It must be," she said.

Orsino was surprised beyond expression by the answer. "Either you do not know what you are saying, or you do not mean it, dear," he said. "Or else you will not understand me."

"I understand you too well."

Orsino made her stop and took both her hands, looking down into her eyes. "You will marry me," he said. "I cannot marry you," she answered.

Her face grew even paler than it had been when they had stood at the window, and so full of pain and sadness that it hurt Orsino to look at it. But the words she spoke, in her clear, distinct tones, struck him like a

blow unawares. He knew that she loved him, for her love was in every look and every gesture, without attempt at concealment. He believed her to be a good woman. He was certain that her husband was dead. He could not understand, and he grew suddenly angry. An older man would have done worse, or a man less in earnest. "You must have a reason to give me—and a good one," he said gravely.

"I have."

She turned slowly away and began to walk alone. He followed her. "You must tell it," he said.

"Tell it? Yes, I will tell it to you. It is a solemn promise before God, given to a man who died in my arms,—to my husband. Would you have me break such a vow?"

"Yes." Orsino drew a long breath. The objection seemed insignificant enough compared with the pain it had cost him before it had been explained. "Such promises are not binding," he continued, after a moment's pause. "Such a promise is made hastily, rashly, without a thought of the consequences. You have no right to keep it."

"No right? Orsino, what are you saying? Is not an oath an oath, however it is taken? Is not a vow made ten times more sacred when the one for whom it was taken is gone? Is there any difference between my promise and that made before the altar by a woman who gives up the world? Should I be any better if I broke mine, than the nun who broke hers?"

"You cannot be in earnest!" exclaimed Orsino in a low voice.

Maria Consuelo did not answer. She went towards the window and looked at the splashing rain. Orsino stood where he was, watching her. Suddenly she came back and stood before him. "We must undo this," she said.

"What do you mean?" He understood well enough.

"You know. We must not love

each other. We must undo to-day and forget it."

"If you can talk so lightly of forgetting, you have little to remember," answered Orsino almost roughly.

"You have no right to say that."

"I have the right of a man who loves you."

"The right to be unjust?"

"I am not unjust." His tone softened again. "I know what it means, to say that I love you; it is my life, this love. I have known it a long time. It has been on my lips to say it for weeks, and since it has been said, it cannot be unsaid. A moment ago you told me not to doubt you. I do not. And now you say that we must not love each other, as though we had a choice to make—and why? Because you once made a rash promise—"

"Hush!" interrupted Maria Consuelo. "You must not—"

"I must and will. You made a promise, as though you had a right at such a moment to dispose of all your life,—I do not speak of mine—as though you could know what the world held for you, and could renounce it all beforehand. I tell you you had no right to make such an oath, and a vow taken without the right to take it is no vow at all—"

"It is, it is! I cannot break it!"

"If you love me you will. But you say we are to forget. Forget? It is so easy to say. How shall we do it?"

"I will go away—"

"If you have the heart to go away, then go. But I will follow you. The world is very small, they say; it will not be hard for me to find you, wherever you are."

"If I beg you, if I ask it as the only kindness, the only act of friendship, the only proof of your love, you will not come,—you will not do that—"

"I will, if it costs your soul and mine."

"Orsino! You do not mean it; you see how unhappy I am, how I

am trying to do right, how hard it is."

"I see that you are trying to ruin both our lives. I will not let you. Besides, you do not mean it."

Maria Consuelo looked into his eyes, and her own grew deep and dark. Then as though she felt herself yielding, she turned away and sat down in a chair that stood apart from the rest. Orsino followed her, and tried to take her hand, bending down to meet her downcast glance. "You do not mean it, Consuelo," he said earnestly. "You do not mean one hundredth part of what you say."

She drew her fingers from his, and turned her head sideways against the back of the chair so that she could not see him. He still bent over her, whispering into her ear. "You cannot go," he said. "You will not try to forget,—for neither you nor I can, nor ought, cost what it might. You will not destroy what is so much to us; you would not, if you could. Look at me, love; do not turn away. Let me see it all in your eyes, all the truth of it, and of every word I say."

Still she turned her face from him. But she breathed quickly with parted lips and the colour rose slowly in her pale cheeks.

"It must be sweet to be loved as I love you, dear," he said, bending still lower and closer to her. "It must be some happiness to know that you are so loved. Is there so much joy in your life that you can despise this? There is none in mine without you, nor ever can be unless we are always together,—always, dear, always, always."

She moved a little, and the drooping lids lifted almost imperceptibly. "Do not tempt me, dear one," she said in a faint voice. "Let me go, let me go."

Orsino's dark face was close to hers now, and she could see his bright eyes. Once she tried to look away, and could not. Again she tried, lifting her head from the cushioned chair. But his arm went round her neck

and her cheek rested upon his shoulder.

"Go, love," he said softly, pressing her more closely. "Go,—let us not love each other. It is so easy not to love."

She looked up into his eyes again with a sudden shiver, and they both grew very pale. For ten seconds neither spoke nor moved. Then their lips met.

CHAPTER XXI.

WHEN Orsino was alone that night, he asked himself more than one question which he did not find it easy to answer. He could define, indeed, the relation in which he now stood to Maria Consuelo, for though she had ultimately refused to speak the words of a promise he no longer doubted that she meant to be his wife and that her scruples were overcome for ever. This was, undeniably, the most important point in the whole affair, so far as his own satisfaction was concerned, but there were others of the gravest import to be considered and elucidated before he could even weigh the probabilities of future happiness.

He had not lost his head on the present occasion, as he had formerly done when his passion had been anything but sincere. He was perfectly conscious that Maria Consuelo was now the principal person concerned in his life, and that the moment would inevitably have come, sooner or later, in which he must have told her so as he had done on this day. He had not yielded to a sudden impulse, but to a steady and growing pressure from which there had been no means of escape, and which he had not sought to elude. He was not in one of those moods of half-senseless, exuberant spirits, such as had come upon him more than once during the winter after he had been an hour in her society and had said or done something more than usually rash. On the contrary, he was inclined to look the whole situation soberly in the face,

and to doubt whether the love which dominated him might not prove a source of unhappiness to Maria Consuelo as well as to himself. At the same time he knew that it would be useless to fight against that domination, for he knew that he was now absolutely sincere.

But the difficulties to be met and overcome were many and great. He might have betrothed himself to almost any woman in society, widow or spinster, without anticipating one hundredth part of the opposition which he must now certainly encounter. He was not even angry beforehand with the prejudice which would animate his father and mother, for he admitted that it was hardly a prejudice at all, and certainly not one peculiar to them, or to their class. It would be hard to find a family anywhere, of any respectability, no matter how modest, that would accept without question such a choice as he had made. Maria Consuelo was one of those persons about whom the world is ready to speak in disparagement, knowing that it will not be easy to find defenders for them. The world, indeed, loves its own and treats them with consideration, especially in the matter of passing follies; and after it had been plain to society that Orsino had fallen under Maria Consuelo's charm, he had heard no more disagreeable remarks about her origin nor the circumstances of her widowhood. But he remembered what had been said before that, when he himself had listened indifferently enough, and he guessed that ill-natured people called her an adventuress or little better. If anything could have increased the suffering which this intuitive knowledge caused him, it was the fact that he possessed no proof of her right to rank with the best, except his own implicit faith in her, and the few words Spicca had chosen to let fall. Spicca was still thought so dangerous that people hesitated to contradict him openly; but his mere assertion, Orsino thought,

though it might be accepted in appearance, was not of enough weight to carry inward conviction with it in the minds of people who had no interest in being convinced. It was only too plain that, unless Maria Consuelo, or Spicca, or both, were willing to tell the strange story in its integrity, there were not proofs enough to convince the most willing person of her right to the social position she occupied after that had once been called into question. To Orsino's mind the very fact that it had been questioned at all demonstrated sufficiently a carelessness on her own part which could only proceed from the certainty of possessing that right beyond dispute. It would doubtless have been possible for her to provide herself from the first with something in the nature of a guarantee for her identity. She could surely have had the means, through some friend of her own elsewhere, of making the acquaintance of some one in society, who would have vouched for her and silenced the carelessly spiteful talk concerning her which had gone the rounds when she first appeared. But she had seemed to be quite indifferent. She had refused Orsino's pressing offer to bring her into relations with his mother, whose influence would have been enough to straighten a reputation far more doubtful than Maria Consuelo's, and she had almost wilfully thrown herself into a sort of intimacy with the Countess Del Ferice.

But Orsino, as he thought of these matters, saw how futile such arguments must seem to his own people, and how absurdly inadequate they were to better his own state of mind, since he needed no conviction himself but sought the means of convincing others. One point alone gave him some hope. Under the existing laws the inevitable legal marriage would require the production of documents which would clear the whole story at once. On the other hand, that fact could make Orsino's position no easier with his father and mother until the

papers were actually produced. People cannot easily be married secretly in Rome, where the law requires the publication of banns by posting them upon the doors of the Capitol, and the name of Orsino Saracinesca would not be readily overlooked. Orsino was aware of course that he was not in need of his parents' consent for his marriage, but he had not been brought up in a way to look upon their acquiescence as unnecessary. He was deeply attached to them both, but especially to his mother, who had been his staunch friend in his efforts to do something for himself, and to whom he naturally looked for sympathy if not for actual help. However certain he might be of the ultimate result of his marriage, the idea of being married in direct opposition to her wishes was so repugnant to him as to be almost an insurmountable barrier. He might, indeed, and probably would, conceal his engagement for some time, but solely with the intention of so preparing the evidence in favour of it as to make it immediately acceptable to his father and mother when announced.

It seemed possible that, if he could bring Maria Consuelo to see the matter as he saw it, she might at once throw aside her reticence and furnish him with the information he so greatly needed. But it would be a delicate matter to bring her to that point of view, unconscious as she must be of her equivocal position. He could not go to her and tell her that in order to announce their engagement he must be able to tell the world who and what she really was. The most he could do would be to tell her exactly what papers were necessary for her marriage and to prevail upon her to procure them as soon as possible, or to hand them to him at once if they were already in her possession. But in order to require even this much of her, it was necessary to push matters farther than they had yet gone. He had certainly pledged himself to her, and he firmly believed that she

considered herself bound to him. But beyond that, nothing definite had passed.

They had been interrupted by the entrance of workmen asking for orders, and he had thought that Maria Consuelo had seemed anxious to detain the men as long as possible. That such a scene could not be immediately renewed where it had been broken off was clear enough, but Orsino fancied that she had not wished even to attempt a renewal of it. He had taken her home in the dusk, and she had refused to let him enter the hotel with her. She said that she wished to be alone, and he had been fain to be satisfied with the pressure of her hand and the look in her eyes, which both said much while not saying half of what he longed to hear and know.

He would see her, of course, at the usual hour on the following day, and he determined to speak plainly and strongly. She could not ask him to prolong such a state of uncertainty. Considering how gradual the steps had been which had led up to what had taken place on that rainy afternoon it was not conceivable, he thought, that she should still ask for time to make up her mind. She would at least consent to some preliminary agreement upon a line of conduct for both to follow.

But impossible as the other case seemed, Orsino did not neglect it. His mind was developing with his character, and was acquiring the habit of foreseeing difficulties in order to forestall them. If Maria Consuelo returned suddenly to her original point of view, maintaining that the promise given to her dying husband was still binding, Orsino determined that he would go to Spicca in a last resort. Whatever the bond which united them, it was clear that Spicca possessed some kind of power over Maria Consuelo, and that he was so far acquainted with all the circumstances of her previous life as to be eminently capable of giving Orsino advice for the future.

He went to his office on the following morning with little inclination for work. It would be more just, perhaps, to say that he felt the desire to pursue his usual occupation while conscious that his mind was too much disturbed by the events of the previous afternoon to concentrate itself upon the details of accounts and plans. He found himself committing all sorts of errors of oversight quite unusual with him. Figures seemed to have lost their value, and plans their meaning. With the utmost determination he held himself to his task, not willing to believe that his judgment and nerve could be so disturbed as to render him unfit for any serious business. But the result was contemptible as compared with the effort.

Andrea Contini, too, was inclined to take a gloomy view of things, contrary to his usual habit. A report was spreading to the effect that a certain big contractor was on the verge of bankruptcy, a man who had hitherto been considered beyond the danger of heavy loss. There had been more than one small failure of late, but no one had paid much attention to such accidents, which were generally attributed to personal causes rather than to an approaching turn in the tide of speculation. But Contini chose to believe that a crisis was not far off. He possessed in a high degree that sort of caution which is valuable rather in an assistant than in a chief. Orsino was little inclined to share his architect's despondency for the present.

"You need a change of air," he said, pushing a heap of papers away from him and lighting a cigarette. "You ought to go down to Porto d'Anzio for a few days. You have been too long in the heat."

"No longer than you, Don Orsino," answered Contini, from his own table.

"You are depressed and gloomy. You have worked harder than I. You should really go out of town for a day or two."

"I do not feel the need of it."

Contini bent over his table again and a short silence followed. Orsino's mind instantly reverted to Maria Consuelo. He felt a violent desire to leave the office and go to her at once. There was no reason why he should not visit her in the morning if he pleased. At the worst, she might refuse to receive him. He was thinking how she would look, and wondering whether she would smile or meet him with earnest, half regretful eyes, when Contini's voice broke into his meditations again.

"You think I am despondent because I have been working too long in the heat," said the young man, rising and beginning to pace the floor before Orsino. "No; I am not that kind of man. I am never tired. I can go on for ever. But affairs in Rome will not go on for ever. I tell you that, Don Orsino. There is trouble in the air. I wish we had sold everything and could wait. It would be much better."

"All this is very vague, Contini."

"It is very clear to me. Matters are going from bad to worse. There is no doubt that Ronco has failed."

"Well, and if he has? We are not Ronco. He was involved in all sorts of other speculations. If he had stuck to land and building he would be as sound as ever."

"For another month, perhaps. Do you know why he is ruined?"

"By his own fault, as people always are. He was rash."

"No rasher than we are. I believe that the game is played out. Ronco is bankrupt because the bank with which he deals cannot discount any more bills this week."

"And why not?"

"Because the foreign banks will not take any more of all this paper that is flying about. Those small failures in the summer have produced their effect. Some of the paper was in Paris and some in Vienna. It turned out worthless, and the foreigners have taken fright. It is all a fraud, at best, or something very like it."

"What do you mean?"

"Tell me the truth, Don Orsino,—have you seen a centime of all these millions which every one is dealing with? Do you believe they really exist? No. It is all paper, paper, and more paper. There is no cash in the business."

"But there is land and there are houses, which represent the millions substantially."

"Substantially! Yes, so long as the inflation lasts. After that they will represent nothing."

"You are talking nonsense, Contini. Prices may fall, and some people will lose, but you cannot destroy real estate permanently."

"Its value may be destroyed for ten or twenty years, which is practically the same thing when people have no other property. Take this block we are building. It represents a large sum. Say that in the next six months there are half a dozen failures like Ronco's and that a panic sets in. We could then neither sell the houses nor let them. What would they represent to us? Nothing. Failure,—like the failure of everybody else. Do you know where the millions really are? You ought to know better than most people. They are in Casa Saracinesca and in a few other great houses which have not dabbled in all this business, and perhaps they are in the pockets of a few clever men who have got out of it all in time. They are certainly not in the firm of Andrea Contini and Company, which will assuredly be bankrupt before the winter is out."

Contini bit his cigar savagely, thrust his hands into his pockets and looked out of the window, turning his back on Orsino. The latter watched his companion in surprise, not understanding why his dismal forebodings should find such sudden and strong expression.

"I think you exaggerate very much," said Orsino. "There is always risk in such business as this. But it strikes me that the risk was greater when we had less capital."

"Capital!" exclaimed the architect contemptuously and without turning

round. "Can we draw a cheque,—a plain unadorned cheque and not a draft—for a hundred thousand francs to-day? Or shall we be able to draw it to-morrow? Capital? We have a lot of brick and mortar in our possession, put together more or less symmetrically according to our taste, and practically unpaid for. If we manage to sell it in time we shall get the difference between what is paid us and what we owe. That is our capital. It is problematical, to say the least of it. If we realise less than we owe we are bankrupt."

He came back suddenly to Orsino's table as he ceased speaking and his face showed that he was really disturbed. Orsino looked at him steadily for a few seconds. "It is not only Ronco's failure that frightens you, Contini. There must be something else."

"More of the same kind. There is enough to frighten any one."

"No, there is something else. You have been talking with somebody."

"With Del Ferice's confidential clerk. Yes, it is quite true. I was with him last night."

"And what did he say? What you have been telling me, I suppose."

"Something much more disagreeable, something you would rather not hear."

"I wish to hear it."

"You should, as a matter of fact."

"Go on."

"We are completely in Del Ferice's hands."

"We are in the hands of his bank."

"What is the difference? To all intents and purposes he is our bank. The proof is that but for him we should have failed already."

Orsino looked up sharply. "Be clear, Contini. Tell me what you mean."

"I mean this. For a month past the bank would not have discounted a hundred francs' worth of our paper. Del Ferice has taken it all and advanced the money out of his private account."

"Are you sure of what you are

telling me?" Orsino asked the question in a low voice, and his brow contracted.

"One can hardly have better authority than the clerk's own statement."

"And he distinctly told you this, did he?"

"Most distinctly."

"He must have had an object in betraying such a confidence," said Orsino. "It is not likely that such a man would carelessly tell you or me a secret which is evidently meant to be kept."

He spoke quietly enough, but the tone of his voice was changed and betrayed how greatly he was moved by the news. Contini began to walk up and down again, but did not make any answer to the remark.

"How much do we owe the bank?" Orsino asked suddenly.

"Roughly, about six hundred thousand."

"How much of that paper do you think Del Ferice has taken up himself?"

"About a quarter, I fancy, from what the clerk told me."

A long silence followed, during which Orsino tried to review the situation in all its various aspects. It was clear that Del Ferice did not wish Andrea Contini and Company to fail, and was putting himself to serious inconvenience in order to avert the catastrophe. Whether he wished, in so doing, to keep Orsino in his power, or whether he merely desired to escape the charge of having ruined his old enemy's son out of spite, it was hard to decide. Orsino passed over that question quickly enough. So far as any sense of humiliation was concerned he knew very well that his mother would be ready and able to pay off all his liabilities at the shortest notice. What Orsino felt most deeply was profound disappointment and utter disgust at his own folly. It seemed to him that he had been played with and flattered into the belief that he was a serious man of business, while all along he

had been pushed and helped by unseen hands. There was nothing to prove that Del Ferice had not thus deceived him from the first; and, indeed, when he thought of his small beginnings early in the year and realised the dimensions which the business now assumed, he could not help believing that Del Ferice had been at the bottom of all his apparent success, and that his own earnest and ceaseless efforts had really had but little to do with the development of his affairs. His vanity suffered terribly under the first shock.

He was bitterly disappointed. During the preceding months he had begun to feel himself independent and able to stand alone, and he had looked forward in the near future to telling his father that he had made a fortune for himself without any man's help. He had remembered every word of cold discouragement to which he had been forced to listen at the very beginning, and he had felt sure of having a success to set against each one of those words. He knew that he had not been idle and he had fancied that every hour of work had produced its permanent result, and left him with something more to show. He had seen his mother's pride in him growing day by day with his apparent success, and he had been confident of proving to her that she was not half proud enough. All that was gone in a moment. He saw, or fancied that he saw, nothing but a series of failures which had been bolstered up and inflated into seeming triumphs by a man whom his father despised and hated, and whom, as a man, he himself did not respect. The disillusionment was complete.

At first it seemed to him that there was nothing to be done but to go directly to Saracinesca and tell the truth to his father and mother. Financially, when the wealth of the family was taken into consideration, there was nothing very alarming in the situation. He would borrow of his father enough to clear him with Del Ferice, and would sell the un-

finished buildings for what they would bring. He might even induce his father to help him in finishing the work. There would be no trouble about the business question. As for Contini, he should not lose by the transaction, and permanent occupation could doubtless be found for him on one of the estates if he chose to accept it. He thought of the interview and his vanity dreaded it. Another plan suggested itself to him. On the whole, it seemed easier to bear his dependence on Del Ferice than to confess himself beaten. There was nothing dishonourable, nothing which could be called so at least, in accepting financial accommodation from a man whose business it was to lend money on security. If Del Ferice chose to advance sums which his bank would not advance, he did it for good reasons of his own, and certainly not with the intention of losing by it in the end. In case of failure Del Ferice would take the buildings for the debt, and would certainly in that case get them for much less than they were worth. Orsino would be no worse off than when he had begun, he would frankly confess that though he had lost nothing he had not made a fortune, and the matter would be at an end. That would be very much easier to bear than the humiliation of confessing at the present moment that he was in Del Ferice's power and would be bankrupt but for Del Ferice's personal help. And again he repeated to himself that Del Ferice was not a man to throw money away without hope of recovery with interest. It was inconceivable, too, that Ugo should have pushed him so far merely to flatter a young man's vanity. He meant to make use of him, or to make money out of his failure. In either case Orsino would be his dupe and would not be under any obligation to him. Compared with the necessity of acknowledging the present state of his affairs to his father, the prospect of being made a tool of by Del Ferice was bearable, not to say attractive.

"What had we better do, Contini?" he asked at length.

"There is nothing to be done but to go on, I suppose, until we are ruined," replied the architect. "Even if we had the money, we should gain nothing by taking up all our bills as they fall due, instead of renewing them."

"But if the bank will not discount any more——"

"Del Ferice will, in the bank's name. When he is ready for the failure, we shall fail, and he will profit by our loss."

"Do you think that is what he means to do?"

Contini looked at Orsino in surprise. "Of course. What did you expect? You do not suppose that he means to make us a present of that paper, or to hold it indefinitely until we can make a good sale."

"And he will ultimately get possession of all the paper himself."

"Naturally. As the old bills fall due we shall renew them with him, practically, and not with the bank. He knows what he is about. He probably has some scheme for selling the whole block to the government, or to some institution, and is sure of his profit beforehand. Our failure will give him a profit of twenty-five or thirty per cent."

Orsino was strangely reassured by his partner's gloomy view. To him every word proved that he was free from any personal obligation to Del Ferice and might accept the latter's assistance without the least compunction. He did not like to remember that a man of Ugo's subtle intelligence might have something more important in view than a profit of a few hundred thousand francs, if indeed the sum should amount to that. Orsino's brow cleared and his expression changed.

"You seem to like the idea," observed Contini rather irritably.

"I would rather be ruined by Del Ferice than helped by him."

"Ruin means so little to you, Don

Orsino. It means the inheritance of an enormous fortune, a princess for a wife, and the choice of two or three palaces to live in."

"That is one way of putting it," answered Orsino, almost laughing. "As for yourself, my friend, I do not see that your prospects are so very bad. Do you suppose that I shall abandon you after having led you into this scrape, and after having learned to like you and understand your talent? You are very much mistaken. We have tried this together and failed, but as you rightly say I shall not be in the least ruined by the failure. Do you know what will happen? My father will tell me that since I have gained some experience I should go and manage one of the estates and improve the buildings. Then you and I will go together."

Contini smiled suddenly and his bright eyes sparkled. He was profoundly attached to Orsino, and thought perhaps as much of the loss of his companionship as of the destruction of his material hopes in the event of a liquidation. "If that could be, I should not care what became of the business," he said simply.

"How long do you think we shall last?" asked Orsino after a short pause.

"If business grows worse, as I think it will, we shall last until the first bill that falls due after the doors and windows are put in."

"That is precise, at least."

"It will probably take us into January, or perhaps February."

"But suppose that Del Ferice himself gets into trouble between now and then. If he cannot discount any more, what will happen?"

"We shall fail a little sooner. But you need not be afraid of that. Del Ferice knows what he is about better than we do, better than his confidential clerk, much better than most men of business in Rome. If he fails, he will fail intentionally and at the right moment."

"And do you not think that there is even a remote possibility of an improvement in business, so that nobody will fail at all?"

"No," answered Contini thoughtfully. "I do not think so. It is a paper system and it will go to pieces."

"Why have you not said the same thing before? You must have had this opinion a long time."

"I did not believe that Ronco could fail. An accident opens the eyes."

Orsino had almost decided to let matters go on, but he found some difficulty in actually making up his mind. In spite of Contini's assurances he could not get rid of the idea that he was under an obligation to Del Ferice. Once, at least, he thought of going directly to Ugo and asking for a clear explanation of the whole affair. But Ugo was not in town, as he knew, and the impossibility of going at once made it improbable that Orsino would go at all. It would not have been a very wise move, for Del Ferice could easily deny the story, seeing that the paper was all in the bank's name, and he would probably have visited the indiscretion upon the unfortunate clerk.

In the long silence which followed, Orsino relapsed into his former despondency. After all, whether he confessed his failure or not, he had undeniably failed and been played upon from the first, and he admitted it to himself without attempting to spare his vanity, and his self-contempt was great and painful. The fact that he had grown from a boy to a man during his experience did not make it easier to bear such wounds, which are felt more keenly by the strong than by the weak when they are real.

As the day wore on the longing to see Maria Consuelo grew upon him until he felt that he had never before wished to be with her as he wished it now. He had no intention of telling her his trouble, but he needed the assurance of an ever ready sympathy which he so often saw in her eyes, and which was always there for him when he

asked it. Where there is love there is reliance, whether expressed or not, and where there is reliance, be it ever so slender, there is comfort for many ills of body, mind, and soul.

CHAPTER XXII.

ORSINO felt suddenly relieved when he had left his office in the afternoon. Contini's gloomy mood was contagious, and so long as Orsino was with him it was impossible not to share the architect's view of affairs. Alone, however, things did not seem so bad. As a matter of fact it was almost impossible for the young man to give up all his illusions concerning his own success in one moment, and to believe himself the dupe of his own blind vanity instead of regarding himself as the winner in the fight for independence of thought and action. He could not deny the facts Contini alleged. He had to admit that he was apparently in Del Ferice's power, unless he appealed to his own people for assistance. He was driven to acknowledge that he had made a great mistake. But he could not altogether distrust himself, and he fancied that after all, with a fair share of luck, he might prove a match for Ugo on the financier's own ground. He had learned to have confidence in his own powers and judgment, and as he walked away from the office every moment strengthened his determination to struggle on with such resources as he might be able to command, so long as there should be a possibility of action of any sort. He felt, too, that more depended upon his success than the mere satisfaction of his vanity. If he failed, he might lose Maria Consuelo as well as his self-respect. He had that sensation, familiar enough to many young men when extremely in love, that in order to be loved in return one must succeed, and that a single failure endangers the stability of a passion which, if it be honest, has nothing to do with failure or success. At Orsino's age, and with his temper,

it is hard to believe that pity is more closely akin to love than admiration.

Gradually the conviction reasserted itself that he could fight his way through unaided, and his spirits rose as he approached the more crowded quarters of the city on his way to the hotel where Maria Consuelo was stopping. Not even the yells of the newsboys affected him as they announced the failure of the great contractor Ronco, and offered, in a second edition, a complete account of the bankruptcy. It struck him indeed that before long the same brazen voices might be screaming out the news that Andrea Contini and Company had come to grief. But the idea lent a sense of danger to the situation which Orsino did not find unpleasant. The greater the difficulty the greater the merit in overcoming it, and the greater therefore the admiration he should get from the woman he loved. His position was certainly an odd one, and many men would not have felt the excitement which he experienced. The financial side of the question was strangely indifferent to him, who knew himself backed by the great fortune of his family, and believed that his ultimate loss could only be the small sum with which he had begun his operations. But the moral risk seemed enormous and grew in importance as he thought of it.

He found Maria Consuelo looking pale and weary. She evidently had no intention of going out that day, for she wore a morning-gown and was established upon a lounge with books and flowers beside her as though she did not mean to move. She was not reading, however. Orsino was startled by the sadness in her face.

She looked fixedly into his eyes as she gave him her hand, and he sat down beside her. "I am glad you are come," said she at last, in a low voice. "I have been hoping all day that you would come early."

"I would have come this morning if I had dared," answered Orsino.

She looked at him again, and smiled faintly. "I have a great deal to say

to you," she began. Then she hesitated as though uncertain where to begin.

"And I—"
Orsino tried to take her hand, but she withdrew it.

"Yes, but do not say it. At least, not now."

"Why not, dear one? May I not tell you how I love you? What is it, love? You are so sad to-day. Has anything happened?"

His voice grew soft and tender as he spoke, bending to her ear. She pushed him gently back. "You know what has happened," she answered. "It is no wonder that I am sad."

"I do not understand you, dear. Tell me what it is."

"I told you too much yesterday——"

"Too much?"

"Far too much."

"Are you going to unsay it?"

"How can I?" She turned her face away and her fingers played nervously with her laces.

"No, indeed! Neither of us can unsay such words," said Orsino. "But I do not understand you yet, darling. You must tell me what you mean to-day."

"You know it all. It is because you will not understand——"

Orsino's face changed and his voice took another tone when he spoke. "Are you playing with me, Consuelo?" he asked gravely.

She started slightly and grew paler than before. "You are not kind," she said. "I am suffering very much. Do not make it harder."

"I am suffering too. You mean me to understand that you regret what happened yesterday, and that you wish to take back your words, that whether you love me or not, you mean to act and appear as though you did not, and that I am to behave as though nothing had happened. Do you think that would be easy? And do you think I do not suffer at the mere idea of it?"

"Since it must be——"

"There is no must," answered Orsino with energy. "You would ruin your life and mine for the mere shadow of a memory which you choose to take

for a binding promise. I will not let you do it."

"You will not?" She looked at him quickly with an expression of resistance.

"No, I will not," he repeated. "We have too much at stake. You shall not lose all for both of us."

"You are wrong, dear one," she said, with sudden softness. "If you love me, you should believe me and trust me. I can give you nothing but unhappiness—"

"You have given me the only happiness I ever knew; and you ask me to believe that you could make me unhappy in any way except by not loving me! Consuelo, my darling, are you out of your senses?"

"No. I am too much in them. I wish I were not. If I were mad I should—"

"What?"

"Never mind. I will not even say it. No, do not try to take my hand, for I will not give it to you. Listen, Orsino, be reasonable, listen to me—"

"I will try and listen."

But Maria Consuelo did not speak at once. Possibly she was trying to collect her thoughts.

"What have you to say, dearest?" asked Orsino at length. "I will try to understand."

"You must understand. I will make it all clear to you, and then you will see it as I do."

"And then—what?"

"And then we must part," she said in a low voice.

Orsino said nothing, but shook his head incredulously.

"Yes," repeated Maria Consuelo, "we must not see each other any more after this. It has been all my fault. I shall leave Rome and not come back again. It will be best for you, and I will make it best for me."

"You talk very easily of parting."

"Do I? Every word is a wound. Do I look as though I were indifferent?"

Orsino glanced at her pale face and

tearful eyes. "No, dear," he said softly.

"Then do not call me heartless. I have more heart than you think, and it is breaking. And do not say that I do not love you. I love you better than you know, better than you will be loved again when you are older,—and happier, perhaps. Yes, I know what you want to say. Well, dear,—you love me, too. Yes, I know it. Let there be no unkind words and no doubts between us to-day. I think it is our last day together."

"For God's sake, Consuelo—"

"We shall see. Now let me speak,—if I can. There are three reasons why you and I should not marry. I have thought of them through all last night and all to-day, and I know them. The first is my solemn vow to the dying man who loved me so well and who asked nothing but that,—whose wife I never was, but whose name I bear. Think me mad, superstitious, what you will; I cannot break that promise. It was almost an oath not to love, and if it was I have broken it. But the rest I can keep, and will. The next reason is that I am older than you. I might forget that, I have forgotten it more than once; but the time will come soon when you will remember it."

Orsino made an angry gesture and would have spoken, but she checked him.

"Pass that over, since we are both young. The third reason is harder to tell and no power on earth can explain it away. I am no match for you in birth, Orsino—"

The young man interrupted her now, and fiercely. "Do you dare to think that I care what your birth may be?" he asked.

"There are those who do care, even if you do not, dear one," she answered quietly.

"And what is their caring to you or me?"

"It is not so small a matter as you think. I am not talking of a mere difference in rank. It is worse than that. I do not really know who I am.

Do you understand? I do not know who my mother was, nor whether she is alive or dead, and before I was married I did not bear my father's name."

"But you know your father, you know his name at least?"

"Yes."

"Who is he?" Orsino could hardly pronounce the words of the question.

"Count Spicca."

Maria Consuelo spoke quietly, but her fingers trembled nervously, and she watched Orsino's face in evident distress and anxiety. As for Orsino, he was almost dumb with amazement. "Spicca! Spicca your father!" he repeated indistinctly. In all his many speculations as to the tie which existed between Maria Consuelo and the old duellist, he had never thought of this one.

"Then you never suspected it?" asked Maria Consuelo.

"How should I? And your own father killed your husband! Good heavens, what a story!"

"You know now. You see for yourself how impossible it is that I should marry you."

In his excitement Orsino had risen and was pacing the room. He scarcely heard her last words, and did not say anything in reply. Maria Consuelo lay quite still upon the lounge, her hands clasped tightly together and straining upon each other.

"You see it all now," she said again. This time his attention was arrested and he stopped before her.

"Yes. I see what you mean. But I do not see it as you see it. I do not see that any of these things you have told me need hinder our marriage."

Maria Consuelo did not move, but her expression changed. The light stole slowly into her face and lingered there, not driving away the sadness but illuminating it. "And would you have the courage, in spite of your family and of society, to marry me, a woman practically nameless, older than yourself—"

"I not only would, but I will," answered Orsino.

"You cannot; but I thank you, dear," said Maria Consuelo.

He was standing close beside her. She took his hand and tenderly touched it with her lips. He started and drew it back, for no woman had ever kissed his hand. "You must not do that!" he exclaimed, instinctively.

"And why not, if I please?" she asked, raising her eyebrows with a little affectionate laugh.

"I am not good enough to kiss your hand, darling; still less to let you kiss mine. Never mind—we were talking—where were we?"

"You were saying——" But he interrupted her. "What does it matter, when I love you so, and you love me?" he asked passionately.

He knelt beside her as she lay on the lounge and took her hands, holding them and drawing her towards him. She resisted and turned her face away. "No, no! It matters too much; let me go, it only makes it worse!"

"Makes what worse?"

"Parting——"

"We will not part. I will not let you go!"

But still she struggled with her hands and he, fearing to hurt them in his grasp, let them slip away with a lingering touch.

"Get up," she said. "Sit here, beside me,—a little further,—there. We can talk better so."

"I cannot talk at all——"

"Without holding my hands?"

"Why should I not?"

"Because I ask you. Please, dear——"

She drew back on the lounge, raised herself a little and turned her face to him. Again, as his eyes met hers, he leaned forward quickly, as though he would leave his seat. But she checked him by an imperative glance and a gesture. He was unreasonable and had no right to be annoyed, but something in her manner chilled him and pained him in a way he could not have explained. When he spoke there was a shade of change in the tone of his voice. "The things you have told me do not influence me in the least," he said

with more calmness than he had yet shown. "What you believe to be the most important reason is no reason at all to me. You are Count Spicca's daughter. He is an old friend of my father; not that it matters very materially, but it may make everything easier. I will go to him to-day and tell him that I wish to marry you——"

"You will not do that!" exclaimed Maria Consuelo in a tone of alarm.

"Yes, I will. Why not? Do you know what he once said to me? He told me he wished we might take a fancy to each other, because, as he expressed it, we should be so well matched."

"Did he say that?" asked Maria Consuelo gravely.

"That or something to the same effect. Are you surprised? What surprises me is that I should never have guessed the relation between you. Now your father is a very honourable man. What he said meant something, and when he said it he meant that our marriage would seem natural to him and to everybody. I will go and talk to him. So much for your great reason. As for the second you gave, it is absurd. We are of the same age, to all intents and purposes."

"I am not twenty-three years old."

"And I am not quite two-and-twenty. Is that a difference? So much for that. Take the third, which you put first. Seriously, do you think that any intelligent being would consider you bound by such a promise? Do you mean to say that a young girl,—you were nothing more—has a right to throw away her life out of sentiment by making a promise of that kind? And to whom? To a man who is not her husband, and never can be, because he is dying. To a man just not indifferent to her, to a man——"

Maria Consuelo raised herself and looked full at Orsino. Her face was extremely pale and her eyes were suddenly dark and gleamed. "Don Orsino, you have no right to talk to me

in that way. I loved him,—no one knows how I loved him!"

There was no mistaking the tone and the look. Orsino felt again, and more strongly, the chill and the pain he had felt before. He was silent for a moment. Maria Consuelo looked at him a second longer, and then let her head fall back upon the cushion. But the expression which had come into her face did not change at once.

"Forgive me," said Orsino after a pause. "I had not quite understood. The only imaginable reason which could make our marriage impossible would be that. If you loved him so well,—if you loved him in such a way as to prevent you from loving me as I love you—why then, you may be right after all."

In the silence which followed, he turned his face away and gazed at the window. He had spoken quietly enough, and his expression, strange to say, was calm and thoughtful. It is not always easy for a woman to understand a man, for men soon learn to conceal what hurts them, but take little trouble to hide their happiness, if they are honest. A man more often betrays himself by a look of pleasure than by an expression of disappointment. It was thought manly to bear pain in silence long before it became fashionable to seem indifferent to joy.

Orsino's manner displeased Maria Consuelo. It was too quiet and cold and she thought he cared less than he really did.

"You say nothing," he said at last.

"What shall I say? You speak of something preventing me from loving you as you love me. How can I tell how much you love me?"

"Do you not see it? Do you not feel it?" Orsino's tone warmed again as he turned towards her, but he was conscious of an effort. Deeply as he loved her, it was not natural for him to speak passionately just at that moment, but he knew she expected it and he did his best. She was disappointed. "Not always," she answered with a little sigh.

"You do not always believe that I love you?"

"I did not say that. I am not always sure that you love me as much as you think you do; you imagine a great deal."

"I did not know it."

"Yes, sometimes. I am sure it is so."

"And how am I to prove that you are wrong and I am right?"

"How should I know? Perhaps time will show."

"Time is too slow for me. There must be some other way."

"Find it then," said Maria Consuelo, smiling rather sadly.

"I will."

He meant what he said, but the difficulty of the problem perplexed him and there was not enough conviction in his voice. He was thinking rather of the matter itself than of what he said. Maria Consuelo fanned herself slowly and stared at the wall.

"If you doubt so much," said Orsino at last, "I have the right to doubt a little too. If you loved me well enough, you would promise to marry me. You do not."

There was a short pause. At last Maria Consuelo closed her fan, looked at it and spoke. "You say my reason is not good. Must I go all over it again? It seems a good one to me. Is it incredible to you that a woman should love twice? Such things have happened before. Is it incredible to you that, loving one person, a woman should respect the memory of another and a solemn promise given to that other? I should respect myself less if I did not. That it is all my fault I will admit, if you like; that I should never have received you as I did, I grant it all; that I was weak yesterday, that I am weak to-day, that I should be weak to-morrow if I let this go on. I am sorry. You can take a little of the blame if you are generous enough, or vain enough. You have tried hard to make me love you and you have succeeded, for I love you very much. So much the worse for me. It must end now."

"You do not think of me, when you say that."

"Perhaps I think more of you than you know, or will understand. I am older than you—do not interrupt me! I am older, for a woman is always older than a man in some things. I know what will happen, what will certainly happen in time if we do not part. You will grow jealous of a shadow, and I shall never be able to tell you that this same shadow is not dear to me. You will come to hate what I have loved and love still, though it does not prevent me from loving you too——"

"But less well," said Orsino rather harshly.

"You would believe that, at least, and the thought would always be between us."

"If you loved me as much, you would not hesitate. You would marry me living, as you married him dead."

"If there were no other reason against it——" She stopped.

"There is no other reason," said Orsino insisting.

Maria Consuelo shook her head but said nothing, and a long silence followed. Orsino sat still, watching her and wondering what was passing in her mind. It seemed to him, and perhaps rightly, that if she were really in earnest and loved him with all her heart, the reasons she gave for a separation were far from sufficient. He had not even much faith in her present obstinacy, and he did not believe that she would really go away. It was incredible that any woman could be so capricious as she chose to be. Her calmness, or what appeared to him her calmness, made it even less probable, he thought, that she meant to part from him. But the thought alone was enough to disturb him seriously. He had suffered a severe shock with outward composure but not without inward suffering, followed naturally enough by something like angry resentment. As he viewed the situation, Maria Consuelo had alternately drawn him on and disappointed

him from the very beginning ; she had taken delight in forcing him to speak out his love, only to chill him the next moment, or the next day, with the certainty that she did not love him sincerely. Just then he would have preferred not to put into words the thoughts of her that crossed his mind. They would have expressed a disbelief in her character which he did not really feel, and an opinion of his own judgment which he would rather not have accepted.

He even went so far, in his anger, as to imagine what would happen if he suddenly rose to go. She would put on that sad look of hers and give him her hand coldly. Then just as he reached the door she would call him back, only to send him away again. He would find on the following day that she had not left town after all, or, at most, that she had gone to Florence for a day or two, while the workmen completed the furnishing of her apartment. Then she would come back, and would meet him just as though there had never been anything between them.

The anticipation was so painful to him that he wished to have it realised and over as soon as possible, and he looked at her again before rising from his seat. He could hardly believe that she was the same woman who had stood with him, watching the thunderstorm, on the previous afternoon.

He saw that she was pale, but she was not facing the light, and the expression of her face was not distinctly visible. On the whole, he fancied that her look was one of indifference. Her hands lay idly upon her fan, and by the drooping of her lids she seemed to be looking at them. The full, curved lips were closed, but not drawn in as though in pain, nor pouting as though in displeasure. She appeared to be singularly calm. After hesitating another moment Orsino rose to his feet. He had made up his mind what to say, for it was little enough, but his voice trembled a little.

"Good-bye, madam."

Maria Consuelo started slightly and looked up as though to see whether he really meant to go at that moment. She had no idea that he really thought of taking her at her word and parting then and there. She did not realise how true it was that she was much older than he, and she had never believed him to be as impulsive as he sometimes seemed. "Do not go yet," she said, instinctively.

"Since you say that we must part —" he stopped, as though leaving her to finish the sentence in imagination.

A frightened look passed quickly over Maria Consuelo's face. She made as though she would have taken his hand, then drew back her own and bit her lip, not angrily, but as though she were controlling something.

"Since you insist upon our parting," Orsino said, after a short, strained silence, "it is better that it should be got over at once." In spite of himself his voice was still unsteady.

"I did not—no—yes, it is better so."

"Then good-bye, madam."

It was impossible for her to understand all that had passed in his mind while he had sat beside her, after the previous conversation had ended. His abruptness and coldness were incomprehensible to her.

"Good-bye, then, Orsino."

For a moment her eyes rested on his. It was the sad look he had anticipated, and she put out her hand now. Surely, he thought, if she loved him she would not let him go so easily. He took her fingers and would have raised them to his lips when they suddenly closed on his, not with the passionate, loving pressure of yesterday, but firmly and quietly, as though they would not be disobeyed, guiding him again to his seat close beside her. He sat down.

"Good-bye, then, Orsino," she repeated, not yet relinquishing her hold. "Good-bye, dear, since it must be good-bye ; but not good-bye as you said it. You shall not go until you can say it differently."

She let him go now and changed her own position. Her feet slipped to the ground and she leaned with her elbow upon the head of the lounge, resting her cheek against her hand. She was nearer to him now than before, and their eyes met as they faced each other. She had certainly not chosen her attitude with any second thought of her own appearance, but as Orsino looked into her face he saw again clearly all the beauties that he had so long admired, the passionate eyes, the full, firm mouth, the broad brow, the luminous white skin,—all beauties in themselves though not, together, making real beauty in her case. And beyond these he saw and felt, over them all and through them all, the charm that fascinated him, appealing as it were to him in particular of all men as it could not appeal to another. He was still angry, disturbed out of his natural self, and almost out of his passion, but he felt none the less that Maria Consuelo could hold him if she pleased, so long as a shadow of affection for her remained in him, and perhaps longer. When she spoke, he knew what she meant, and he did not interrupt her nor attempt to answer.

"I have meant all I have said to-day," she continued. "Do not think it is easy for me to say more. I would give all I have to give to take back yesterday, for yesterday was my great mistake. I am only a woman, and you will forgive me. I do what I am doing now, for your sake; God knows it is not for mine. God knows how hard it is for me to part from you. I am in earnest, you see. You believe me now?"

Her voice was steady but the tears were already welling over.

"Yes, dear, I believe you," Orsino answered softly. Women's tears are a great solvent of man's ill-temper.

"As for this being right and best, this parting, you will see it as I do sooner or later. But you do believe that I love you, dearly, tenderly, very—well, 'no matter how—you believe it?"

"I believe it——"

"Then say 'Good-bye, Consuelo,'—and kiss me once,—for what might have been."

Orsino half rose, bent down and kissed her cheek. "Good-bye, Consuelo," he said, almost whispering the words into her ear. In his heart he did not think she meant it. He still expected that she would call him back.

"It is good-bye, dear—believe it—remember it!" Her voice shook a little now.

"Good-bye, Consuelo," he repeated.

With a loving look that meant no good-bye he drew back and went to the door. He laid his hand on the handle and paused. She did not speak. Then he looked at her again. Her head had fallen back against a cushion and her eyes were half closed. He waited a second and a keen pain shot through him. Perhaps she was in earnest after all. In an instant he had recrossed the room and was on his knees beside her trying to take her hands.

"Consuelo,—darling,—you do not really mean it! You cannot, you will not——"

He covered her hands with kisses and pressed them to his heart. For a few moments she made no movement, but her eyelids quivered. Then she sprang to her feet, pushing him back violently as he rose with her, and turning her face from him.

"Go, go!" she cried wildly. "Go,—let me never see you again,—never, never!"

Before he could stop her, she had passed him with a rush like a swallow on the wing, and was gone from the room.

(To be continued.)

CHAPTERS FROM SOME UNWRITTEN MEMOIRS.

VIII.

ONE day Jackson drove the blue fly up to the door, and my father, looking rather smart, with a packet of papers in his hand, and my grandmother who had come over from Paris, and my sister and I all got in, and we drove away, a nervous company, to Willis's Rooms to hear the first of the lectures upon the English Humorists. My father was of course very nervous, but as we drove along he made little jokes to reassure us all; then together we mounted the carpeted staircase leading to the long empty room, and after a time he left us. I have no very pleasant recollection of that particular half-hour of my life. I remember the unoccupied chairs, and people coming in rather subdued, as if into a church. Many of the windows were open, the sky looked very blue over the roof-tops, our hearts were thumping, the carriages outside came driving up, with distant rumbling sounds, growing louder and louder; and I remember wondering at the time whether I should mind very much if the day of judgment could suddenly come upon us and thus put an end to this terrible ordeal, which desperate imagination was a real consolation to me at the moment. It is a happiness to realise now who it was who came to my dear father's help when all our emotion and sympathy was, I fear, only a hindrance. I cannot help giving the passage out of Mrs. Kemble's records concerning my father's lectures, although it may have already been quoted by others.

I met Thackeray at Miss Perry's at dinner, a few days before he began his course of lectures on the English Essayists, and he asked me to come and hear him, and told me he was so nervous about it, that he was afraid he should break down. . . .

He was to lecture at Willis's Rooms, in

the same room where I read; and going thither before the time for his beginning, I found him standing like a forlorn, disconsolate giant in the middle of the room, gazing about him. "Oh Lord," he exclaimed, as he shook hands with me, "I'm sick at my stomach with fright!" I spoke some words of encouragement to him, and was going away, but he held my hand like a scared child, crying, "Oh, don't leave me!" "But," said I, "Thackeray, you mustn't stand here. Your audience are beginning to come in;" and I drew him from the middle of the chairs and benches, which were beginning to be occupied, into the retiring-room adjoining the lecture-room, my own reading having made me perfectly familiar with both. "Oh," he said, "if I could only get at that confounded thing [his lecture], to have a last look at it!" "Where is it?" said I. "Oh, in the next room on the reading-desk." "Well," said I, "if you don't like to go in and get it, I'll fetch it for you." And remembering well the position of my reading-table, which had been close to the door of the retiring-room, I darted in, hoping to snatch the manuscript without attracting the attention of the audience, with which the room was already nearly full. I had been used to deliver my readings seated, at a very low table, but my friend Thackeray gave his lectures standing, and had had a reading-desk placed on the platform, adapted to his own very tall stature, so that when I came to get his manuscript it was almost above my head. Though rather disconcerted, I was determined not to go back without it, and so made a half jump and a clutch at the book, when every leaf of it (they were not fastened together) came fluttering separately down about me. I hardly know what I did, but I think I must have gone nearly on all fours in my agony to gather up the scattered leaves, and retreating with them, held them out in dismay to poor Thackeray, crying, "Oh, look, look what a dreadful thing I have done!" "My dear soul," said he "you couldn't have done better for me. I have just a quarter of an hour to wait here, and it will take me about that to page this again, and it's the best thing in the world that could have happened."

And so while my father was paging the manuscript, and our hearts were beating, the people kept coming in more and more quickly and filling up the places in front of us, behind us, all round us, settling down, unfastening their wraps, nodding to each other. I was gazing at a lady who had taken off her bonnet and sat in a little Quaker cap just in front of me, when suddenly, there stood my father facing this great roomful. Though we had been waiting all the time, he came sooner than we expected. His voice sounded strained and odd for an instant, and I didn't recognise it. "In treating of the English humorists of the eighteenth century, it is of the men rather than of their works," so the strange voice began, and then almost immediately it softened and deepened and became his own: and at the same time as he stood there I realised that he looked just like himself; there was his waistcoat and his watch-chain, and my vague youthful spinnings, and chokings, and confusions began to subside.

I was now glad the day of judgment hadn't come. I don't remember taking in one word after the first sentence, but sat staring and taking breath, and realising somehow that all was going well. Among other things I did notice, and do remember, the proud and happy look of light and relief in my grandmother's face, and her beautiful grey eyes all shining, when the people applauded and the lecture was all over just as unexpectedly as it had begun, and the lady in the Quaker cap tied her bonnet on again, and somebody said she was the Duchess of Sutherland, and the people were all talking and crowding up and shaking hands with the lecturer. Then came the happy drive home; Jackson made the horse gallop, and my father laughed and made real jokes, without any effort, and we laughed and enjoyed every jolt and turning on the way home this time.

These lectures gradually became a

part of our everyday life, just as much as the books and the articles my father used to write, and the little printers' boys waiting and swinging their legs in the hall. Young men's Institutes and provincial agencies used to invite him to the north and to the south. He came and he went; sometimes he read in the suburbs or at friends' houses, at Mrs. Proctor's and elsewhere; once he read at home, at the request, I think, of his well-loved Mrs. Elliot and Miss Perry. Sometimes he took us with him when he was not going very far from home. To this day I can enjoy that glorious summer's day we first spent at Oxford among the gardens and the gables, and where, with our host St. John Thackeray, we stood in the street outside watching the backs of the audience pressing in to hear the lecture.

One year my father told us that he was going away—he was going to America to give his lectures there; he was going as soon as he had finished the book upon which he was engaged, and we were to spend the winter in Paris during his absence. "I must replace my patrimony," he said, "and make some provision for your mother and for you, and you must go to my mother's and spend the winter with her; you must work as hard as you can while I am away, and consider yourselves at college in a fashion, and learn French and a little music to play me to sleep of an evening when I come home." Alas! we neither of us could ever make enough music to send him to sleep, though I have often sent him out of the room. My hair used to stand on end, my fingers used to turn to stone when I tried to play to him; even the things I liked best seemed to go off the rails in some general catastrophe.

America was farther away then than it is now, when a thousand Columbuses or Columbi (whatever the plural may be) cross the ocean week by week with a parting nod and a return ticket. That whole summer of 1854 seemed darkened by the coming separation. It

was a long and burning summer ; even the shadows seemed burnt up, and so were the gardens at the back of the houses, and the brown turf and the avenues of Kensington Gardens, those gardens where that strange mist which is not quite fog nor quite real, nor even a fancy, but which has always seemed to me to be the very spirit of London itself, comes rising along the straight and formal distances. My father was hard at work finishing a book which some people still say is the best of all his books. People read it then, when it came out, and read it still and re-read it. He used to write in his study with the vine shading the two windows, and we used to do our lessons, or sit sewing and reading in the front room with the bow-window to the street ; and one day, as we were there with our governess, my father came in, in great excitement. "There's a young fellow just come," said he ; "he has brought a thousand pounds in his pocket ; he has made me an offer for my book, it's the most spirited, handsome offer, I scarcely like to take him at his word ; he's hardly more than a boy, his name is George Smith ; he is waiting there now, and I must go back ;" and then, after walking once up and down the room, my father went away, and for the first time, a life-time ago, I heard the name of this good friend-to-be. When only the other day he bestowed a fortune on a little god-daughter, it all came back very vividly to my mind.

A great many arrangements were made for the coming year's absence ; there was a talk of letting the house, but it was only shut up with a couple of old servants to keep it. My father's servants rarely left him. His old publishers gave him a silver punch-bowl, and his new publisher (I am writing of nearly half a century ago) gave him a beautiful despatch-box ; and this same good friend gave to my sister and to me a noble drawing of our father's head by Samuel Lawrence to look at while he was away. Then we all set off and went abroad to rejoin

our grandmother and grandfather, and for a little while we travelled together, and then my father had to leave us. I can see him now as he stood beside a wooden column at some railway junction, Olten I think it was, and he stooped to kiss us ; and then he put us into our railway carriage, and we were carried off with heavy hearts while he stood looking at us fixedly, tall and straight, and the train scudded off. Somehow we never got used to these partings, though our father returned each time safe and in good spirits and pleased with his journey and its results.

People can still walk through Kensington Square and look up at the house yet standing with its windows facing westward, in which Rachel Castlewood once dwelt, and where Colonel Esmond came, and where the Pretender also came in his blonde periwig and blue ribbon, and threw away,—so Colonel Esmond tells us—a kingdom for a passing fancy. In so looking they may well people the past with figures all touched with its colour, and yet so strangely living still, that as one reads one seems to have known them all. But any one who may try to follow the brilliant shades out of the precincts of Kensington Square and beyond Young Street, where the porters with the chairs must have passed, into the high road which leads to London, must be imaginative indeed to conjure up their remembrance any more. The *King's Arms*, where the conspirators were assembled when King George was proclaimed, has vanished out of sight ; its quiet gardens are piled up high with bricks and stories rearing like a new Babel to the sky. There are cities spreading where the market-gardens were flowering but yesterday, tramcars passing, engines whistling. I can scarcely imagine my father himself writing *Esmond* in such a chaos. Novels of the future will take place by telegram, in flats, in lifts, in metropolitan railways—they will whirl Ixion-like on perpetual bicycles and wheels. It is difficult to

imagine devotion such as Esmond's continuing in this rapid sequence of events; it seems as if new impulses, both physical and mental, must arise in such a multiplicity of impressions; as if a new race must people the earth. Beatrix indeed might belong to these later times; but Esmond and Lady Castlewood would seem strangely out of place.

There is one part of London however which seems to me little changed, except indeed for the better, by the onward course of fashion and events; and that is Chelsea, whither we used often to be sent as children, crossing the lanes and fields, and coming by a pond and a narrow street called Paradise Row into the King's Road, and then after a few minutes' walk to Cheyne Row, where Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle lived to the end of their lives, and which seems to all of us made living still by their dead footsteps.

The old house in Cheyne Row is one of the first things I can remember when we came to London. Its stillness, its dimness, its panelled walls, its carved banisters, and the quiet garden behind, where at intervals in the brickwork lay the tobacco-pipes all ready for use; little Nero, the doggie, in his little coat, barking and trembling in every limb—it all comes before one with so much clearness that, although so much has been said about that home, I cannot omit all mention of a place which made so vivid a part of my early life.

In the dining-room stood that enchanting screen covered with pictures, drawings, prints, fashions, portraits without end, which my father liked so much; up stairs was the panelled drawing-room with its windows to the street, and the portrait of Oliver Cromwell hanging opposite the windows. But best of all, there was Mrs. Carlyle herself, a living picture; Gainsborough should have been alive to paint her; slim, bright, upright, welcoming, in her place. She looked like one of the grand ladies our father used sometimes to take us to call

upon. She used to be handsomely dressed in velvet and point lace. She sat there at leisure, and prepared for conversation. She was not familiar, but cordial, dignified, and installed in her corner of the sofa by one of the little tables covered with nicknacks of silver and mother-of-pearl.

Almost the first time we ever went to see her we had walked to Chelsea through the snow, and across those lanes which have now become South Kensington, and when we arrived, numb and chilled and tired, we found in the dining-room below, standing before the fire, two delicious hot cups of chocolate all ready prepared for us, with saucers placed upon the top. "I thought ye would be frozen," said she, and the hot chocolate became a sort of institution. Again and again she has sat by, benevolent and spirited, superintending our wintry feasts, inviting our confidences, confiding in us to a certain degree.

She used to tell us many of the stories which have since come into print. She was never weary of discoursing of "Carlyle," of his genius, his dyspepsia, of quoting his sayings. "If you wish for a quiet life," she used to say, "never you marry a dyspeptic man of genius." I remember she used to tell us, when he first grew a beard, how all the time he had saved by ceasing to shave he spent wandering about the house, and bemoaning that which was amiss in the universe. As children we did not have much of Carlyle's company; if he came in and sat down in the arm-chair, which was his on the opposite side to the sofa, we immediately went away; but the sense of his presence overhead in the study distinctly added to our enjoyment while he remained up stairs. Mrs. Carlyle used to tell us of her early life, of her love for study. Many of her admonitions and friendly warnings have remained in my memory. Once, looking expressively at me with her dark eyes, she began to speak of self-control. "We have all," she said, "a great deal

more power over our minds than it is at all the fashion to allow, and an infinity of resource and ability to use it. There was a time in my own life," she said, "when I felt that unless I strove against the feeling with all my strength and might I should be crazed outright. I passed through that time safely; I was able to fight it out and not to let myself go. People can help themselves, that I am convinced of, and that fact is not nearly enough dwelt upon."

One day we went there; we were no longer children. I was a grown young lady, keeping a diary at the time, in which I find the following record of a brown-paper parcel:—"To Mrs. Carlyle's, where we found Lady Stanley of Alderley just leaving the room; then Mrs. Carlyle, taking up the talk again, immediately began speaking enthusiastically about *Adam Bede*, which had just come out. She had written to the author, she said; she had received grateful messages from him in reply. She said that Mr. Carlyle quite declined reading the book, and when she expressed a hope that it might be sent to her, 'What should he send it to *you* for?' he said. 'Why shouldn't he send it?' she answered; 'he sent me the first.' 'You are just like all weemen,' said he. (Mrs. Carlyle always says weemen.) 'You are always forming unreasonable expectations.'"

We were going away, for we heard a ring at the bell, which seemed to betoken fresh visitors. Then the door opened, and in came, not visitors, but Charly the maid, carrying an unmistakable publisher's brown-paper parcel. Mr. Carlyle, who had followed her in, came and sat down upon the sofa. Mrs. Carlyle exclaimed and started forward. We opened our eyes in delighted partisanship; the string was cut, and there sure enough were the three orange volumes of *Adam Bede*, sent with the author's compliments.

Here are two notes addressed to my father in the philosopher's handsome cramped handwriting:—

Chelsea, 24th May, 1860.

Alas, dear Thackeray, I durst as soon undertake to dance a hornpipe on the top of Bond Steeple, as to eat a white-bait dinner in my present low and lost state! Never in my life was I at such a pass. You are a good brother man; and I am grateful. Pray for me, and still hope for me if you can.

Yours ever,
T. CARLYLE.

Chelsea, 26th May, 1860.

DEAR THACKERAY,—The thing I contemplated just now (or the nucleus of the thing) was a letter concerning that anecdote about *Fontenoy*, "*Faites feu, Messieurs*," on the part of the English, with answer from the *Gardes Françaises*, "Begin you, gentlemen; wouldn't do such a thing for the world!" My letter is from Lord Charles Hay, Captain of the Scots Fusiliers, main actor in the business; it was sent me last year by Lord Gifford; and I could have made a little story out of it which would have been worth publishing.

But on applying to Lord Gifford, he (what he is himself, I believe, truly sorry for) cannot at present give me permission. So the poor little enterprise falls to nothing again; and I may be said to be in a state of ill-luck just now!

If I ever in the end of this book have life left, you shall have plenty of things. But for the time being I can only answer *de profundis* to the above effect.

Fair wind and full sea to you in this hitherto so successful voyage, for which the omens certainly are on all sides good. Your people do not send me a copy (since No. I.); but we always draw our purse upon it to the small extent requisite.

Yours ever truly,
T. CARLYLE.

These notes were written when the *Cornhill* was first started, an eventful time in our lives.

Some voices are those which speak to us; others speak for us. The first belong to the immortals who dwell apart somewhere beyond the boundaries of common life and moods, and it is, perhaps, for that very reason they are best able to give utterance to oracles; the others belong to humanity itself, and among these latter voices, who would not reckon Carlyle's?

"I wish you could get Carlyle's miscellaneous criticisms," wrote my father

in 1839, in a letter to his mother. "I have read a little in the book. A nobler one does not live in our language, I am sure, and one that will have such an effect on our ways of thought and prejudices. Criticism has been a party matter with us till now, and literature is a poor political lacquey. Please God we shall begin, ere long, to love art for art's sake. It is Carlyle who has worked more than any other to give it its independence."

I went out with my father one evening in the winter of 1863, and as we were driving along in the dusk by the Serpentine we passed Carlyle walking across the park, and my father seeing him leant forward and waved his hands. "A great benevolent shower of salutations," Carlyle called it, when he spoke in after days of this last meeting.

After Mrs. Carlyle's death, it was Carlyle that we used to go and see in the old drawing-room, which he took to inhabiting altogether. It was no surprise, when his history was told, to

realise that he had been sometimes cross and often contrary; but that passion of tender love and remorse and devotion came as a revelation all the more moving that one had almost guessed it at times. It was when my own father died that something was revealed to us of his deep and tender feeling.

After Carlyle himself was laid to rest I went for the last time to look at the house which I remembered all my life; my little boy was with me, and he began crowing and pointing to the old screen full of pictures, some of which his grandfather had drawn. It still stood in its place in the dining-room. From behind the old screen came Mrs. Alexander Carlyle, carrying her little Tom, who, seeing a fellow-baby, uttered three deep notes, and in them was some strange echo of the familiar voice that had filled the house so long, and reached how far beyond its walls!

ANNE RITCHIE.

FAIZULLAH.

HE was beating his wife : an occupation which annihilates time, dissolves the crust of culture, and reduces humanity in both hemispheres to a state of original sin. It is therefore immaterial what Faizullah and Haiyat Bibi did or said during the actual chastisement, for they behaved themselves as any other couple in the same circumstances would have done ; that is to say after the manner of two animals, one injured in his feelings, the other in her body.

She screamed vociferously, but for all that took her punishment with methodical endurance ; indeed, there was a distinct air of duty on both sides which went far towards disguising the actual violence. Finally he let her drop, decisively but gently, in one of the dark corners of the low windowless room, and laid aside the bamboo in another. From a third crept an older woman, silent but sympathetic, carrying a *lotah* full of water with which she administered comfort to the crushed victim. Faizullah Khan watched the gradual subsidence of his wife's sobs with evident satisfaction.

"Hast had enough for this time, O Haiyat ?" he asked mildly. "Or shall I catch thee peeping through the door at the men-folk again like a cat after a mouse ? True, 'tis the way thou caughtest me for a husband, Light of mine Eyes ; but I will have none of it with other men. Or rather, thou shalt pay for the pleasure. Ay ! every time, surely as the farmer pays the usurer for having a good crop. And if there be more than peeping, then I will kill thee. Think not to escape as a mere noseless one ; some may care to keep a maimed wife, secure that none will seek her ; but not I, Faizullah Khan, Belooch of Birokzai. Did I not marry thee, O Haiyat, Marrow of my

Bones, because of thy fair face ? Then what good wouldst thou be to me without a nose ? Therefore be wise, my heart, or I shall have to kill thee some day."

"The *sahibs* will hang thee in pig-skin if thou dost," whimpered the woman vindictively. "Yea, I would die gladly to see thee swing like the wild beast thou art !"

The sense of coercion was evidently passing away, nor were there wanting signs that ere long tears would be dried at the flame of wrath fast kindling in Haiyat's big black eyes. Faizullah, standing at the open door, through which the yellow sunshine streamed in a broad bar of light, looked across the mud roof of the lower story, past the sandy stretches and broken rocky distance to where a low line of serrated blue mountains blocked the horizon. They were the Takt-i-Suleiman, and beyond their peaks and passes lay Beloochistan.

"There are no *sahibs* yonder," he said stretching his right hand towards the hills ; "no one to come between a man and his right of faithful wife. God knows I am ready for my father's house again ; 'tis only thy beauty, Skin of my Soul ! Core of my Heart ! that keeps me dawdling here a stranger in the house of mine ancient enemies. Why wilt thou not come with me to the mountains, O Haiyat ?"

"I am not a wild beast as thou art," she retorted still with speech checked by sobs. "I will stay here and get thee swung, for the *sahib-logues* worship a woman away over the black water and do her bidding. They will fill thy mouth with dirt, and burn thy body, and curse thy soul to the nether—"

"Nay ! innermost Apple of mine Eye ! do I not worship thee ? And art

thou not a Belooch also by race, though thy people have dug the grave of their courage with the plough, and tethered their freedom beside their bullocks? They were not always dirt-eaters, mean-spirited, big-bellied——”

“*Hai! Hai!*” That was the beginning of the storm. What followed drove big Faizullah into the court below, where the voices of the two women ceased to be articulate; for it is one thing to beat the wife of your bosom in order to correct a trifling indiscretion, another to deny her and her attendant the right of subsequent abuse. So he smoked his pipe placidly, and amused himself with polishing his well-beloved sword which he kept in defiance of the Arms-Act.

The poorer women of the village nodded at each other as the shrill clamour, floating over the high encircling wall, reached the well where they came to draw water.

“The stranger hath big hands,” chuckled one; “yet are they smaller than Haiyat’s eye. That comes of being a widow so long.”

“There will be murder some day, mark my words!” muttered an old hag with a toothless leer. “What else canst thou expect from a Belooch of Birokzai? *Peace! Peace!* that is what our men say nowadays. In my time, if a man of his race had laid a finger on a woman of ours, there would have been flames over the border, and blood enough to quench them afterwards. But they are afraid of the *sahibs* and the pigskin; not so Faizullah; he is of the old sort knowing how to keep his wife.”

“He will not keep her for all that, *mai*,” sneered a strapping girl, who by the handsome water-vessels she carried showed herself to be a servant in one of the richer houses. “We shall get her back some day, despite her father-in-law’s wickedness in letting her marry a good-for-nothing soldier, just because of keeping a hold on her jewels.”

“Hold on their honour, O thou false tongue!” shrilled another of the

group. “The daughter of thy house would have brought shame on ours. She needed a fierce one to keep her straight.”

“After the man, woman, thy house gave her first, O depraved tongue that tasteth not the truth! Hadst thy people sent her back, our house would have kept her safe enough.”

“And her jewels doubtless——”

So the war of words begun on the top story of Faizullah’s house found its way into the narrow village street, and thence into many a mud-walled courtyard where the women set down the pots of water and rested themselves in wrangling. It even went further, for in not a few of them, when the men came back from their day’s work in the fields, the subject of Haiyat Bibi’s peeping eyes and coveted jewels gave rise to slow, deliberate conversation over the evening pipe. Faizullah was right to beat her, of course; on that point all were agreed. The rest was open to argument, and had been so any time these last two years, ever since the bold Belooch of Birokzai, on his way home from short service in a frontier regiment, had halted in his retreat at the sight of a pair of big black eyes behind the chink of a door. Long before that, however, the question as to whether those jewels of Haiyat Bibi’s were to come back with her in search of a new bridegroom among her own relations, or to remain with her in her late husband’s family, had greatly exercised the minds of this little village, which lay, as it were, safely tucked away between the sheets of sand in the bed of the Indus and the soft pillow-like curves of the rising ground. It was given to be excited over trifles, this far-away, peaceful-looking cluster of mud huts; for beneath the newly acquired placidity of the peasant which its inhabitants presented on the surface, the lawlessness of the border bravo remained ready for any emergency. On the whole, however, it afforded a beautiful example of the civilising effects of agriculture, and

as such figured in many reports having as their object the glorification of British rule. Consequently it was watched with jealous eyes by the district and police officials who felt their sheet-anchor of reference would be gone, did any serious crime occur to throw discredit on the converted community. Despite this constant care, the village might have been situated in the moon for all the authorities knew of the petty intrigues, the hopes and fears, which formed the mainspring of its life. Even the ordinary human interests of its inhabitants were all too low in tone and insignificant to secure alien sympathy. So Haiyat Bibi's peeping eyes and her Delhi-made jewels were disturbing elements unknown to those who signed the monthly criminal reports with placid self-satisfaction at their own success in securing virtue. Even when, egged on by the family, her best-looking male cousin made bids for possession of both these charms in various underhand ways, the consequent employment of Faizullah Khan's marital discipline did not resound so far as the *hakam's* ears.

Therefore it was an unpleasant surprise when, some six weeks after the original homily against peeping, the significant red envelope which proclaims the shedding of blood found its way into the Deputy Commissioner's mail-bag, and brought the news of Haiyat Bibi's murder by her husband, and his subsequent flight to the hills. Furthermore it was reported by the sergeant of police, whose very writing showed signs of trepidation, that the whole village was in an uproar, and he himself quite unable to cope with the situation. As luck would have it, some eighty miles of desert and alluvial land lay between the excited village and the fountains of law and order; for when the red envelope arrived, the responsible officials were in camp at the other end of the district. Nearly a week passed ere they could arrive on the scene, and by that time the villagers had sworn to renew

a blood-feud which in past days had thriven bravely between their clan and that of the murderer. They were in fact on the point of turning their ploughshares into swords; an example which is dangerously contagious among the border tribes. Owing therefore to the necessity of persuading the people to trust the far-reaching arm of the law for revenge, instead of seeking it for themselves, the actual murder itself dropped into comparative insignificance. Indeed the details of the crime were meagre in the extreme, though the evidence of previous jealousy on the husband's part, even to the point of grievous hurt, was copious. Nor did the family of the murdered woman's late husband hesitate to accuse her blood-relations of a deliberate attempt to seduce her from the path of virtue, in order to bring about a poisoning of the bold Faizullah, and a subsequent transference of her affection, and her jewels, to a more suitable husband. Inquiry, indeed, opened up such a vista of conflicting rascality that the district-officer was fain to draw a decent veil over it by accepting the result; namely, that on a certain specified night, between certain specified hours, Faizullah Khan, not content with having beaten his wife to the verge of death during the day, had stealthily completed his devilish work, dragged the corpse of his victim a mile or two from the village, stripped it of ornament, and left it to be devoured by jackals and hyenas. In support of which statements, gruesome remains, found it was said some days after the woman's disappearance, were produced and sworn to vociferously by all. Relics of this sort are apt to be somewhat indefinite; this objection, however, was met by the subsequent discovery of portions of Haiyat Bibi's clothing, and a golden earring which the murderer had evidently dropped in his flight. The latter whetted the desire for revenge to a point, for, as the district-officer sorrowfully admitted to himself, the old-fashioned wrath at injury to

their women, so conspicuous among these border clans, was now freely intermixed with that greed of gold which civilisation brings in its wake. Finally, since nothing else could be done, a reward of two thousand rupees was put upon the capture of one Faizullah Khan, Belooch of Birokzai, accused of murdering his wife and stealing her jewels, value twelve hundred rupees. In addition, vague promises were made that on the next punitive expedition into the mountains an eye would be kept on the escaped criminal's particular village, and some indemnity exacted. There the matter rested peacefully, and so, on the whole, did the village, though the friction between the blood-relations of the murdered woman and her connections by marriage remained a fruitful source of petty disturbance.

"There is something odd about that case," remarked a new magistrate when some fresh complaint of quarrel came in for settlement. "It is always more satisfactory to have a real, *whole* body; but when there is neither corpse nor criminal it is useless depending on facts at all." The police-officer, however, declared, that having personally conducted the inquiry, no mistake in either facts or conclusions was possible.

Eighteen months passed by and early spring was melting the snows on that great rampart of hills which, properly guarded, would make the rich plains of India impregnable to a western foe. The border land was astir, its officials busy, for the long-talked-of punitive expedition was about to thread its way through the peaks and passes, bearing the rod which teaches respect, and perhaps fidelity. On the outermost skirts of British territory the district-officer sat in front of his tent writing a rose-coloured report on the progress of education. It was long overdue owing to the pressure of martial preparations, so he was in a hurry and superlatives came fast.

"A Belooch from beyond the border
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is seeking the Presence with insistence," pleaded a deferential myrmidon.

"Let him come," was the prompt reply; and the pen, laid aside, rolled over, blotting the last sentence. What matter? Reports have various values, and the Belooch might bring information that would make force more forcible.

An old soldier by the look of him, tall and well set up, with merry brown eyes and a determined face. He brought himself to the salute gravely. "May the life of the Presence be prolonged and may his gracious ears bear with a question. Is it true that the armies of the Lord of the Universe march against the village of one Faizullah of Birokzai?"

"The armies of the Kaiser-i-Hind march against all thieves and murderers, no matter who they are."

"The words of the Presence are just altogether. Yet may the Protector of the Poor bear with this dust-like one. Is it true that he who brings Faizullah captive will receive two thousand rupees reward?"

"It is true."

"*Wah illah!* The purse of the great Queen is big if the long tongue of the Presence wags in it so freely. The sum is great."

"The crime is great. He murdered his wife; besides, he stole twelve hundred rupees' worth of jewels."

The smile of contempt which had crept into the listener's face at the first part of the sentence gave place to a frown at the sequel. "The Presence says it; shall it not be true?" he remarked with deference after a pause. "Nevertheless the sum exceeds the purchase. Does not the price of the calf buy the cow also?¹ There is no wisdom in a bad bargain."

The Deputy Commissioner looked at the new comer sharply. "Doubtless; yet none have given the man up, though all know we will keep our threat of burning the village next month."

The sudden clenching of the slender,

¹ In India the cow will not give milk if separated from her calf.

nervous hands, and quick inflation of the nostrils convinced the Englishman that there was an envoy prepared with concessions, but asking for some in return.

"The Presence hath said it, shall it not be true?" came the urbane reply. "Yet we Beloochees do not give up our friends readily. Still Faizullah is no friend of mine, so for twelve hundred rupees I will bring him to the Presence, *dead or alive*, if his honour pleases."

The Deputy Commissioner stared. "But the reward is two thousand; why do you ask less?"

"The price of the calf is the price of the cow, *Huzoor!* I lack but one thing, and the sum is enough for the purchase. Am I a pig of *baniah* to fill my stomach with rupees I cannot digest? Nevertheless the task is hard, and those who go near violence may suffer violence. What good then would the money be to me if I were dead?"

Like many of his race he had a curiously round mellow voice that seemed to linger over the slow, stately periods as he went on deliberately. "Surely God will reward the Presence for his patience! But a man's son is as himself. And I have a son, *Huzoor*, a babe in his mother's arms,—may the Lord bring him safe to man's estate! If the great Purveyor of Justice would cause a writing to be made setting forth that my son is as myself, and my earnings as his earnings,—nay, surely the Presence will have the best bliss of Paradise reserved for it specially! And if the munificent Keeper of the Purse of Kings would cause the twelve hundred rupees to be set apart from this day in the hands of some notable banker—not that this slave doubts, but the Presence knows the guile of all women, and that all men are born of women and therefore guileful. It knows also that without the hope of money naught but the stars in heaven will move; and if I say, 'Lo, I will give, when I have it,' who will listen? But if I

say, 'Lo! there it is safe, do my bidding and take it,' 'tis a different matter. If, therefore, the Presence will do this, his slave will bring Faizullah, Belooch of Birokzai, to him *alive or dead*, and there will be no need to burn the village."

"And the jewels?"

Once more the frown came quick. "If I bring Faizullah to the Halls of Justice alive, surely the mightiness of the Presence will make him speak. If I bring him dead, can this slave follow him and find speech in the silence of the grave? Say! is it a bargain? Yes or no?"

The anxious brevity of the last question showed the sincerity of the man more than all his measured words, and after some further parley, the conditions were arranged. That is to say, the sum of twelve hundred rupees was forthwith to be paid into the hands of a responsible third party, and the informer was to bring Faizullah to the Deputy Commissioner dead or alive, before reprisals had been taken on the village, when, even if he lost his life in the capture, the reward was to be paid to his heirs and assigns. He positively refused to give either name or designation, asserting with the measure of sound common sense which characterised all his utterances, firstly, that no one would know if he gave a false one; secondly, that if he failed to keep his promise he would prefer to remain in oblivion; thirdly, that if he did succeed in bringing Faizullah to book, the Presence would be sure to recognise his servant and slave. Thus he departed as he came, a nameless stranger.

Three days after an excited crowd rode pell-mell into the magistrate's compound. "*Huzoor!* we have found him! we have found him!" rose a dozen voices, as the more influential men of the party crushed into the office room.

"Who?"

"Faizullah the Belooch! Faizullah the murderer! The reward is ours, praise be to God and to your honour's

opulence. *Wah*, the glad day! *Wah*, the great day!"

"*Salaam alaikoun*, Friend of the Poor Man!" came an urbane voice from their midst. "The dust-like slave of the Presence hath kept his word. Behold! I bring to you Faizullah Khan, Belooch of Birokzai, alive, not dead."

A sudden hush fell on the jostling crew as the prisoner raised his fettered hands in grave obeisance and then solemnly, vigorously, spat to right and left ere he began: "Snakes gorged to impotence by their own greed! Bullocks with but one set of eyes to seven stomachs! Listen! whilst I recount the tale of your infamies to the ear of this wise judge. *Huzoor!* I am Faizullah, husband of the virtuous Haiyat, mother of my son, dwelling content in the house of my father. Yea! it is true. For her jewels' sake her father-in-law bound me by promises, when he found me caught in the meshes. So for her sake I stayed in a strange land, and the fields and the jewels were as his. Then the old man yonder, her uncle, wrath at the marriage, set his son to beguile her; so I beat her till she had no heart to be beguiled. For all that they would not cease from evil ways. Therefore said I to her father-in-law: 'Let me go, for surely if I stay thy daughter-in-law will have to die some day, and then her blood-kin will claim all. Let me go in peace with the Core of my Heart; but keep thou the jewels, for I have no need of them.' So in the night, he consenting, I crept away with her in my arms, for she had eaten her full of the bamboo that day, and could not walk. The Presence knows what came next—how they called me murderer and thief, her blood-kin claiming the land, her father-in-law denying that he had the jewels—and I nursing her to health in the mountains! *Huzoor!* the *sahib-logues* are like eagles. They look at the Sun of Justice and see not the maggots it breeds in carrion like these men. Yet what cared I, away in the hills, what men called me here, save that my house wept for her jewels, and I

knew not how to get them; for the reward was heavy and oaths are cheap in your land. Then came word that the armies of the Lord of the Universe were to march on this slave's village, and I said, 'What is life to me? I will try and speak them fair.' The Presence knows what came next. When the paper concerning the twelve hundred rupees had been writ, I knew that my house would have her rights anyhow, even if the eyes of the Just Judge were blinded by false oaths, or that I came dead into the Presence. So I said by message to the carrion: 'Dispute no longer among yourselves. Let me buy the jewels at the price ye have put on them. Let one take the money and the other the land, or half-and-half. Only give me the jewels, and say in the Court of Justice,—"Lo! we were mistaken! Faizullah hath not killed his wife. He nursed her back to life, and she hath a right to the jewels and her son after her. But the land is ours by agreement."' And to this they said 'yea' guilefully. But when I went to the village, trusting them not at all, they seized me and brought me hither for the reward, not knowing that the Presence had deigned to cast his gracious eye on this poor man before, and that the reward was for me, or my son. It is spoken. Let the Presence decide!"

Nothing is more surprising than the rapidity with which a got-up case breaks down when once the judge is seen to have an inkling of the truth. *Sauve qui peut* is then the motto; especially when nothing more is to be gained from consistency. Haiyat's relations professed themselves both astonished and overjoyed at her return to life, and before the inquiry was over had arranged for the discovery of the jewels, which were found carefully hidden away in the house of Haiyat Bibi's female attendant, who had died of cholera the year before; an ingenious incident productive of injured innocence to all the living.

"It has not emptied the purse of the great Queen after all," said Faizullah

with a broad smile, as he stood beside the Deputy Commissioner on the crest of a hill, and pointed to a terraced village on the opposite side of the valley. "Nor hath the house of the poor suffered; for the dwelling of this slave will not burn."

The jewels were in a bundle under his arm, and he was taking leave of the expedition he had accompanied so far. He turned to go, then suddenly saluted in military fashion. "If this dust-like one might give freedom to his tongue for a space, the wisdom of experience might reach the ear of those above it. Yea, of a surety the patience of the Presence is beyond praise! *Huzoor!* if the reward writ in the police-stations had been for me, alive or dead, peace would have been beyond my fate, for the great mind of the Protector of the Poor will perceive that a man hath no power against false oaths when once his own tongue is stilled by death; and that even the justice of kings avails little when the case has been decided already. Let this memory remain with the *sahibs*, 'Peace bringeth Plenty, and Plenty

bringeth Power.' So it comes that false oaths are easy under the rule of the Presence."

That was his farewell.

The snow still lay low, but the orchards were ablaze with blossom as, next morning, the little force led by white faces straggled peacefully along the cobbled ledges of the steep village lane. On either side strips of garden ground, where the heart-shaped leaves of the sweet yam pushed from the brown soil, led up to the low houses, backed by peach and almond trees and festooned by withered gourds. On the steps leading to a high-perched dwelling overhanging the lane, stood Faizullah Khan with a sturdy youngster in his arms. The Deputy Commissioner happening to come last and alone, stopped to look at the child with kindly eyes. As he did so a door above was set ajar, and through the chink he caught a glimpse of a singularly beautiful pair of black eyes and a flash of jewels.

"It is my house, *Huzoor*," said Faizullah with rather a sheepish grin. "I gave her leave to peep this time."

A SCHOOL FOR MIRTH.

"A jolly place," said he, "in times of old !
But something ails it now ; the spot is cursed."

ON all sides is heard the complaint that humour is in its decay, and dulness on the increase, more especially among the poorer classes, and in village life. And this new disease, like many others of the present day, is no sooner suspected, than it is overdone with remedies more or less chimerical, while genuine alarm is beginning to be felt that to all our piping in the market-place the children will not dance. The accusation that England is no longer merry, if true, may cause regret, but it ought not to create surprise. Having educated (on compulsion) the workman to the last pitch of dulness and satiety, he is now to be amused and interested, if possible, by contract. We wonder (not that he is likely to be offered the choice) which mode of treatment he will prefer. Probably, after a course of elementary lectures on science, an invitation to join the Sixth Standard in learning shorthand, and to take twelve lessons in the Tonic sol-fa notation in order to personally assist in "Pleasant Evenings for the People," he will feel that these national jokes would throw a gloom over any community, and that he is not to blame if they have affected his own natural cheerfulness.

Delusions as a rule die hard ; yet surely some day we shall abandon the pretence that the British workman's habits, tastes, opinions, and ideals of enjoyment are identical with his employer's. At present he is undergoing a process of petting such as no community could experience without developing the natural infirmities of a spoiled child. Thanks to all the efforts to improve their condition, the

labourers are too taken up with their own grievances to wish to be gay. A little knowledge may or may not be a dangerous thing, but it is an unsettling thing. From the beginning of the world, side by side with the Tree of Knowledge, has grown the bitter herb of Discontent. The nation, like Frankenstein, is confronted with a self-constructed problem,—a monster of its own making. The Son of the Soil seemed, so to speak, a natural product, but what is to be done with the Child of the Lecture-Hall? Village life twenty years ago, with its local interests, its absorbing questions of crops and seasons, its animal charges to tend, and its combined freedom and leisure, we should have thought peculiarly free from the *ennui* of crowded cities with their stereotyped work and play alike. According to Mr. Ruskin the time is to come when the world will discover that, "To watch the corn grow and the blossoms set, to draw hard breath over ploughshare and spade, to think, to love, to hope, to pray" (we fear he includes "to read"), "are the things that make men happy." State-aided amusements will defer such an attitude of mind indefinitely. It is especially noticeable of the growing public activity of women that they consider novelty of any sort a sovereign panacea for all evils, and, in their anxiety to ameliorate the condition of the very poor, they have lately brought themselves to believe more amusement the universal remedy for the short-comings of the cottage home. It is perhaps only natural. We have ourselves never felt any doubt but that one of the most powerful of the serpent's arguments was that which appealed to

Eve's desire for "a little change." Adam, we have always been able to picture to ourselves as contented as could be, surveying his first crops, and tending his various charges, as good as gold, as the children say, but Eve evidently felt "dull." This it may be premised is a state of mind and life that no amusements, however varied, can permanently relieve. The proof of this is that the upper classes, as a rule, have hitherto been the only sufferers from the disorder of dulness (the meaning of which, according to the dictionary, it might be a wholesome exercise to seek); and it is the upper classes, from their advantage of leisure and wealth, who have had every opportunity of combating the disease. It would be too much, we fear, to expect of our philanthropists to take this lesson to heart. Hodge, however, in spite of his popularity, has a little common sense left, and is endowed with more powers of observation than he is commonly credited with. He knows very well that the whole condition of village life and of cottage homes is completely changed; and he has realised long ago that the strongest, if most innocent, factor in the change is the very education from which so much was hoped. The most perfunctory attendance at the dames' school relieved the mothers of part of their responsibilities, and also laid the flattering unction to their souls that the "three R's," the utility, nay, the necessity of which nobody would deny, were being duly taught and learned. But the three R's had this inestimable advantage over the present system, that they were more easily learned and more quickly forgotten; and once the puzzling duty of mastering them was discharged, the sturdy scholars could turn to what they considered (with some excuse) the real business of life.

It would be useless now to consider whether compulsory education is an unmixed good, but it is equally useless to expect the same conditions of life as when parents were free agents.

Nearly all responsibility is taken from them; take a little more and they will find themselves regarded merely as the providers of so much raw material, to be prepared for use as the reigning government decrees. The writer can well remember village life as it used to be, before it was thought necessary for every labourer's child to satisfy the Department in the 'ologies. Temperament could then be taken into consideration; and while some of a family "got learning" and took up the more ambitious trades, others troubled the Pierian spring not at all. "Polly," you would be told, "is quick at her book, so we sends her to schule regular; but Susan won't never have no head for learning, so we keeps her at home to help, and she's a rare little maid to work." Now, both Polly and Susan must go through the educational mill, and poor Susan will be ground exceeding small before she is released. Departments cannot recognise anything so unconstitutional as temperament. In the old days the home-interests were more identical for young and old, and the family was reared in an atmosphere of mutual help as of mutual struggle, both most important factors in the making of character. The boys grew up in almost full enjoyment of their birthright of fresh air and out-door employment, trotting sedulously at their father's heels, as he pursued his daily avocation of ploughing and sowing or hedging and ditching, making early acquaintance with not only every bird, beast, and flower, but also with the farm animals and charges, and gaining a facility for tending them never acquired after early boyhood. Their most arduous duties were the taking of father's dinner, or the keeping of birds off the newly-sown cornfields, up to the happy date when the petticoated urchin merged into gaitered boyhood, cracking his long whip in all the pride of promotion to the charge of horses and waggons that had long been the object of his highest ambition. The girls

were kept at home at least part of every day to help the mother, and by dint of early training were past mistresses in the art of baking and washing, and mending and making, and could in turn bring up a family to be as deft as themselves. Help in all the multifarious duties of a poor man's home was second nature, from minding the baby upwards, and it was certainly better for the babies, both present and to come. Now the neediest mother can see but little of her children after the early hour when, ill-fortified by a scanty breakfast, and with but poor furnishing for the mid-day meal, the whole family, above the tender age of five, must set off in all weathers to pass the rest of the working-hours in a hot and noisy schoolroom. It could not be a matter for wonder if they consider the study of botany in the higher Standards a poor exchange for the shouting freedom of green lanes and blossoming hedges, or a slice of bread and bacon in the pocket a more convincing argument than the most elaborate thesis on the chemistry of foods. Old-fashioned people could tell the names, as well as the properties, of many flowers, and had a smattering of knowledge, almost intuitive, of pot-herbs and simples, and a certain degree of plant-lore was handed down from parents to children. All this is being fast forgotten, and the pretty country names and the old-world meanings, often of themselves a whole history in a word, are alike relegated to the lumber-room of the past, disappearing before the botany-manuals with their glib vocabulary as swiftly as aborigines in the track of civilisation. The modern *Perdita* would scarcely recognise her posy; you must go back two generations at least for the names, and it is to be feared farther still for their derivations. "Poor selly things," said an old dame recently, "they can none of 'em do as they used. When I was a girl my mother would have stared to see the doctor's carriage at the door so long as she could stir the yarb-pot; but it

sims as no one has their health now-a-days; they all larn themselves so onsatisfied, they're forced to go to the towns to get ill." And for the few who remain behind, the leisure, the ease, the carelessness of country life is gone. "The glorious time," which Wordsworth sighed for, "when this imperial realm shall prize knowledge as her noblest wealth" is already upon us. But the imperial realm by no means stops at the "rudiments of letters," nor has time to bestow much thought on "moral and religious truth." Matthew Arnold's poor child of nature need not wander in upon a Social Science Congress, in order to be dismayed at the dreary vista of spectacled women and men scant of hair. In any Government schoolroom he cares to look into, he may see spectacled boys and girls, while among their enforced teachers premature baldness would seem almost inseparably connected with extra subjects. It is perhaps unreasonable to expect that with so much to keep up inside the head anything can be successfully cultivated outside.

It is complained of the smoking chimneys and cinder-strewn tracts of the manufacturing districts, that England is working itself black in the face. If in addition, it is being compelled to learn itself sad at the heart, its ultimate condition would seem to be deplorable indeed. And this is the reproach which our philanthropists are anxious to remove from our midst. Every month, almost every week, some working-man's recreation room, "with a platform for performances," is opened. Plans of the kind are easily set on foot, but not so easily kept going. Funds are scanty, and will not run to more ambitious programmes than mediocre talent can supply. Do we not all know the kind of entertainment thought good enough to tempt Hodge's pennies and sixpences out of his pocket for the local charities? The performers who are asked, not because they give any particular pleasure, but because it gives them particular

pleasure to be asked, and the deferential applause that dare not be discriminating, though you may catch many a whispered criticism among an audience with whom familiarity has bred contempt. Then in the towns the Penny Reading (surely sacred to British occupation at home or abroad) or the cheap Evenings for the People hold their sway. They must not be too instructive, must be bright and lively to attract, and finally find their own level in the buffoonery of comic songs in character, and are discontinued on principle by the vicar. It can hardly be too much insisted on that third-rate amusements educate nobody, not even third-rate people. When they are left to find their own, it is a different matter. In diversions, as in other things, the old proverb of "all is fine that's fit" holds good.

But where are the old amusements gone—the observances that had their roots in every custom and tradition held dear since Christmas holly replaced the mistletoe's dark rite, and that marked each season with its appropriate revel in its honour? The recollection is already dim of the Christmas mummers, with their house-to-house carols and quaintly decked-out singers, headed by old Father Christmas himself, with his stuffed bag of straw on his back, mask, and crooked stick, the village-clerk often the Coryphæus of the rustic throng. Where are the old floral usages of our country folk,—the procession of the rush-bearing, the carrying of the palm-branches at the close of Lent, the cakes dutifully baked and offered on Mothering Sunday, the branch of oak scrupulously placed against the house door on Restoration Day, the May garland's fragrant rounds, and then the crowning of the working year with the Harvest Home and the Harvest Supper? They are all but gone, gone with the flower-strewing, the well-dressing, the decking of houses with wreaths, and floors with rushes—certainly more cleanly as well as more lovely than their grimy successors of well-worn rug or carpet. Not one

of these simple rites but showed how intimately bound up with daily country life were the flowers and plants which were once so cherished by the poor, that even their meanings furnished our older poets with a wealth of material for their Pastorals and Calendars, written to "frame, A dainty border round the shepherd's name." But rustic revels are no more; village feasts are nothing if not political; gatherings bring strife, and meetings mean debate. In no long time few will remember the old customs sufficiently to use them, for the keeping of anything is a significant word, and embraces the keeping in the heart. No nation, no people, can afford to lose the traditions of their forefathers. Belief does not long survive observance: religion cannot long withstand the smug toleration of a chartered half-hour; and the pathos and spirit of the National School sing-songs are conspicuous by their absence. Already some research is necessary to rescue old songs from oblivion of which the oral traditions have well-nigh passed away. Many such ditties, in the West of England especially, still exist, and their stirring, manly, and martial character have but little meaning for a generation that knows not war, unless it be the war of strikes—nor heroes other than their paid agitators, nor public spirit which is not lost in the dreary prate of utility. The alarm has been already struck, and there are efforts to gather up the fragments before it is too late. But the term revival, for what should never have been allowed to die, strikes but coldly on the ear. We can almost see the neat edition in which dialect songs, in the guise of modern English, will receive decent burial. The vocabulary at the end will be their chief mourner; foot-notes will ring their death knell. Rather would we provide each grand-sire with a phonograph before which to tune his quivering lyre; for there is no time to be lost over the chronicle and it should be indelible. The very occasions for which the songs were written

are as irretrievably of the past as the singers themselves.

There is, we fancy, but one way in which real amusements can be brought back to our villages, and that is, not by providing them, but by joining in them heart and soul, just as they are. Where rich and poor meet together in all the different sports and pastimes, as well as the festivities of a parish, there is a common bond of union and a benefit conferred on both sides. If the rectory waggonette must leave the gates almost daily for tennis some miles off, and the squire's daughters depend solely on a season in Mayfair for their gaieties, and on visitors from town for their society, there must perforce be a decline of interest in rural sports pure and simple. We say pure and simple advisedly, because from the very benevolence of those in authority, the fatal desire for perfection is but too apt to be, like *le mieux*, the enemy of *le bien*. Country cricket (to take an instance of a game which stands first for providing healthily and happily for the long summer evenings) must be encouraged in the spirit of clan-ship, village against village, not by ransacking the neighbourhood for players, and even invoking professional help to make up "a winning side." Pride in their own powers must be the key-note struck to induce interest. Superiority is always baffling to rustic skill. The home-played fiddle, the amateur band, the volunteer choir,

have a spirit of diversion all their own, and untutored mirth is shy of admitting any alien spirit of its crew. No doubt a reaction will set in, and Nature be allowed to have her way again. Let us help on independence and originality by fostering everywhere we can every kind of harmless and invigorating outdoor sports, and always in preference to so-called accomplishments. We shall be constantly told that training must tell at all points; but old-fashioned service owed much of its thoroughness to concentration, and the diffusion of even useful knowledge is not favourable to the single eye, while the study of the Fine Arts can never be friendly to the cottage hearth. To have endless patience with every detail of the daily *ménage*, the less aspirations for the mastery of Art or Literature are indulged in the better; and efficiency in either will always be a formidable rival to the more homely accomplishments of housewifery. Art is long, and the labourer's day is already all too short to make enough of the scanty material at hand for the comfort and well-being of life. It is the well-nigh lost spirit of simple happiness and content that we wish to restore. The pleasures of life are still to be had, not, perhaps, for the asking, but certainly for the effort of making them for ourselves, and fortunately they are never more accessible than in their "woodland dress."

THE METROPOLITAN HOSPITALS.

THERE is no class of institution which, from one point of view, enjoys so much of the public confidence as the general hospitals of London. The enormous amount of the work which they do, and the devotion with which the best medical and surgical skill in the country is gratuitously expended in their service, appeal at once to our imagination and to our sympathies. We all, indeed, feel, and rightly feel, that the closing at any time of the general hospitals would be nothing less than a national disaster. At the same time, a conviction has been growing up during the past years, on the part of some members of the hospital staffs as well as of their critics, that the present position of the hospitals is not entirely satisfactory. One of the endowed hospitals has suffered severely from the depreciation of its property, while the voluntary institutions have felt an increasing difficulty in keeping their subscriptions up to such an amount as shall enable them to meet the ever-increasing demands made upon them. Without going into financial details we may safely say that in the case of the unendowed hospitals the annual subscriptions have not in recent years amounted to one-half of their necessary expenditure. They are, indeed, as is proved by the evidence recently taken by a Committee of the House of Lords, principally maintained by the legacies which they receive, and which may in any year amount to £100 or £100,000, and by large donations from unexpected quarters. The highly precarious nature of such support requires no proof.

Is this state of things likely to improve if left to itself? It is to be feared not. In the present impatience of public opinion, in our restless

desire to find a panacea for all distress, and in our consequent anxiety to leave no experiment untried, there is a growing tendency on the part of the benevolent to cease supporting old-established institutions, and to give their guineas or their thousands to "some new thing." The hostility so widely shown by the medical profession to special hospitals arises, as is pointed out in the report of the Lords' Committee to which I have already referred, from the fact that numerous small hospitals for special diseases have been instituted by medical men for the purposes of their own advancement, and that such a course of action leads to the establishment of hospitals where they are not wanted, to waste of money incident to the creation of badly-managed and small institutions, and to the deception of the public by inducing them to subscribe to undertakings alleged to be of public benefit, but which are really mere schemes for private emolument, and also useless for teaching purposes. The Committee is probably not far wrong when it expresses the opinion that if some method of organisation be not adopted, a time will come when it will be necessary for hospitals to have recourse either to government aid or to municipal subvention. Such a development may appear not undesirable to some; but both the medical profession and those social economists who put more faith in private enterprise than in State control, would regard its necessity as a public calamity.

The remedy suggested by the Lords' Committee is the voluntary establishment of a central Board consisting of representatives of the hospitals, medical corporations, and medical charities. It would seek no

statutory powers. Its functions would be to receive endowments and donations for distribution to medical charities; to report periodically upon the existing hospitals and upon all proposals for the foundation of new hospitals; and to promote a proper system of accounts and audit co-operation among the medical charities and between them and general charity.

Whether the influence of such a Board would be sufficient to enable it to prevent the establishment of useless or unworthy hospitals, it were hard to say. But it may certainly be doubted whether the addition to the Hospital Sunday and Saturday Funds of one more competitor in the art of begging would increase the total amount of subscriptions collected for the hospitals. The new body would undoubtedly be a dignified one, and would inspire confidence; but it is not from any want of public confidence in the hospitals that these institutions are at present in need. The main causes of that need are to be found partly in the competition of other charitable undertakings; and partly, as I venture to think, in facts, which necessitate our consideration of the problem from a very different point of view.

Before leaving the subject, however, I should wish to make one remark. Suppose even that a large increase in subscriptions to the hospitals were secured, the relief would probably be merely temporary. The supply of charity creates a demand, and if the hospitals were enabled to expand their accommodation so as to offer prompt and comfortable treatment to their present out-patients, the numbers of the latter would increase. Persons whose time is of some value, and who are at present deterred by the delay and discomfort of the waiting-room, would then apply; and we could not blame them for doing so. In a word, the only existing check on the number of applicants would be removed.

In 1122, when Rahere founded St. Bartholomew's Hospital, or a hundred

years later, when St. Thomas's came into existence, the poor had few sources of help to look to in times of sickness. Circumstances are very different now. With the development of the Poor-Law parish infirmaries and dispensaries have been established and perfected, until, under the Metropolitan Poor-Law Act of 1867, London has been provided with a system of rate-supported hospitals and asylums, which are managed almost as efficiently as the voluntary institutions. At the present time we may say that there are two sets of institutions in existence, whose function it is to provide medical treatment for those who are too poor to purchase it for themselves from the practitioners at the market price.

Let us take the rate-supported institutions first. There are now in London twenty-four Poor-Law infirmaries, separate from the workhouses, but under the management of the guardians of the poor. These infirmaries are provided to meet the needs of the particular locality in which they are situated, and contain in the aggregate twelve thousand four hundred and forty-five beds. In addition to these, there are, under the management of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, five fever hospitals, a convalescent fever hospital, a small-pox hospital, and three small-pox ships. In every London union or parish there exists, as part of the regular relief machinery of the guardians, one dispensary at least where out-patients are treated, and whose medical officers when necessary visit patients at their own homes. There are now forty-four such dispensaries. In 1890 nearly one hundred and twenty thousand orders for attendance were issued, of which over ten thousand were for permanent treatment.

With the exception of the hospitals for infectious diseases, which are open without inquiry to all patients, these institutions are intended for persons who are entirely without pecuniary means; and, except in urgent cases, an order for admission or treatment

must be obtained from the relieving officer for the district. If any persons able to pay are admitted to the infirmary, the guardians have power to recover from them or from their families the whole or part of the cost; and it has been estimated that about ten or twelve per cent. of the patients contribute in this way to the expense of their maintenance.

Turning now to the charitable institutions, we find that there are in London twenty general hospitals (containing five thousand three hundred and sixty-two beds), over sixty special hospitals, about forty free and part-paying dispensaries, and about an equal number of so-called provident dispensaries. These institutions, for the most part, stand in no sort of relation to one another. Each is under independent management: they compete with one another in the struggle for subscriptions; and, in this struggle, each strives to show the largest number of patients treated.

This vast machinery, or rather collection of machines, is at present doing to a great extent the same class of work as the Poor-Law medical departments. The hospitals, it is true, have the means of dealing with, and do in fact deal with, difficult cases which those departments are perhaps not competent to treat. But many of their in-patients, and the bulk of their out-patients, belong to the same classes as those to be found at the Poor-Law infirmaries and dispensaries. The Lords' Committee in their Report say:

At most hospitals, though not all, the governors and subscribers have the right to give to deserving applicants letters for admission as in-patients or for treatment in the out-patient department. According, however, to the evidence received from a good many of the hospitals, the usual practice at the general hospitals appears to be to give a very slight preference to applicants bringing letters over those (and they are the vast majority) who come without them. An out-patient's letter will sometimes open the way direct to the out-patient department, when a person not so provided must first pass through the

casualty-room and take his chance of being passed on or treated summarily there. But any person whose illness is sufficiently serious appears to be considered equally in either case a proper subject for treatment. So, in regard to admission to the wards, the only privilege attaching to a letter seems to be that, where two cases are of equal gravity, the preference will be given to the recommended case; but disease, it is said, and not the recommendation of a subscriber, is the real passport of admission; and the selection of the applicants to be taken in rests practically with the officer whose duty it is to admit to the hospital (usually the house-physician or surgeon).

If, then, disease is the only passport demanded from applicants for treatment, the qualification required at the hospitals and at the Poor-Law institutions are identical. What wonder, then, that the poor prefer to seek help from those agencies, where they can obtain it without being styled "paupers," and that the number of persons annually treated at all the Poor-Law dispensaries in London (exclusive of those visited at home) is little more than half the number of out-patients at one hospital alone! If the out-patients at London hospitals have multiplied until they have reached more than one hundred thousand persons (or nearly a quarter of a million attendances) in the year, how can the authorities ever hope to erect and maintain a building large enough to hold all the in-patients who would come if they could obtain admission? Would they be enabled to do so by getting one more body to back their appeals for subscriptions? Must we not look for a remedy rather to some change which will reduce, or at any rate check the increase of the number of applicants for gratuitous treatment?

If the history of our medical charities were forgotten, if the hospitals had no traditions and their governing-bodies no prejudices, it would be easy, with the material which we have, to construct a system of medical relief which would be free from the difficulties that beset us at present, and

which would work well, at least on paper.

The scheme is a very simple one. The general hospital should admit no patient (except in casualty and obviously urgent cases) without a certain payment. Any person would if willing to pay, and if qualified on medical grounds, be admitted as an in- or out-patient. All persons unable to pay would be dealt with in the first instance at the Poor-Law infirmary or dispensary. The authorities at the latter institutions could, however, at the cost of the rates, send to the hospitals all cases of difficulty or cases requiring special treatment. These institutions would also be thrown open to students and lecturers from the medical schools. Working men might individually be unable to make the payments required at the hospitals; but collectively they could afford to do so, and the friendly society or provident dispensary would make the payment required for the admission of its members.

The advantages of this scheme are obvious. In the first place the work of the hospitals would by its adoption be brought within manageable limits, and their pecuniary difficulties would probably be removed. But more important results even than this might follow the change. The present method of gratuitous treatment, especially in the out-patient departments of the hospitals, is thought by many to be one of the most potent causes of pauperisation at work in our social system. By pauperisation I do not mean simply "pauperism" in the legal sense, but education in the habit of looking to the State or to charity to supply what a man might naturally be expected to provide for himself. The hospitals make no real effort to exclude from their benefits those who could afford to pay for medical treatment; and even if they wished to do so, they would find any satisfactory system of inquiry impossible, dealing as they do with such vast numbers of patients. The experiments in this

direction made by St. Bartholomew's, London, and King's College Hospitals can scarcely be regarded as successful. Indeed the last-mentioned has, I believe, discontinued the attempt as a failure. In spite of the opinion of the Lords' Committee that, "The charities are not abused to any serious or appreciable extent,"—an opinion which simply reflects that of certain professional witnesses, and was not, so far as I know, based upon any definite evidence—it is impossible not to suspect that a very large number of patients attend the hospitals who could without difficulty pay for their treatment elsewhere. Well-dressed people are certainly to be found in the out-patients' waiting-room; and if the number be small the reason is simple enough. Ladies have been overheard in omnibuses accounting to their friends for their appearance abroad in their oldest garments by the fact that they are on their way to the hospital.

After all, however, the fair question to ask is not, has the patient got the money in his pocket? but, would he have had it, if the general invitation to gratuitous treatment had not encouraged him to spend the money elsewhere? That the closing of the out-patient departments would greatly stimulate the growth of provident dispensaries is proved by the fact that they flourish at present with the greatest vitality in those districts which are furthest removed from the great hospital centres.

Is this pauperisation merely imaginary? I think not. Any one who has worked intelligently among the poor of London cannot have failed to notice how the receipt of free medical treatment has led promptly to the demand for free admission to a convalescent home, and how the latter is thought to carry with it the right to have the rent paid during the patient's absence, with perhaps an allowance on his return until he gets into work again. And this view is also borne out by the experience of the past. When Guy's

Hospital imposed the small charge of threepence per head upon all out-patients who could not prove their inability to pay it, very few, I believe, took the trouble to migrate to the other hospitals. Our best guide however in dealing with the present question is the analogy furnished by the history of Poor-Law reform. A hundred thousand free out-patients are a hundred thousand persons as assuredly learning "to get something for nothing," as are the recipients of out-door relief in a laxly administered union. The experience therefore of those unions where wholesale out-door relief has been abolished should be useful to us. What do we find? The refusal of out-relief has, as it has been repeatedly proved, led neither to the starvation of the former recipients, nor to the admission of more than a fraction of them to the workhouse. On the contrary the change has led to the growth of friendly societies, to the increase of savings-bank deposits, and, according to the evidence of the most intelligent observers, to a general improvement in comfort and content throughout the district. Nor need we wonder. All indiscriminate charity tends to sap the energy and self-respect of the recipient; and though at times of sudden and exceptional distress measures of wholesale relief may be necessary, we should always regard them as a drug and not as a food, and bear in mind that the body politic, equally with the individual animal, will waste away on a diet of medicine.

It may, of course, be urged that to transfer this army of dependents from the hospitals to the Poor-Law, will merely shift the burden from one shoulder to another, and will leave the strain upon the community really unmitigated. The Poor-Law of England is of course always open to the charge that it encourages improvidence; but the extent of this encouragement is minimised by the conditions under which relief is given. For the patient treated at the

infirmity or dispensary, there is always in the background the right of the guardians to recover the cost from him. And apart from this consideration, the sentimental objection to the name "pauper" will tend strongly to lead the more self-respecting of the poor to join some provident institution, rather than have recourse to the parish.

Several objections however can be taken to the scheme. The most important of these is one raised in the interest of medical science. The staffs of the general hospitals comprise the surgeons and physicians who are at the head of the profession, the men to whom we look for the advancement of science and the perfection of practical skill. It is a matter of the highest importance that these gentlemen should be enabled to study every case which displays novel or interesting features. The present system is admirable for their purpose. The out-relief departments act as a huge net, from which all the less important cases are sorted out in the course of the preliminary treatment, while the difficult cases are passed on to the senior members of the staff. Again, to all the more important hospitals are attached medical schools, and the interest of medical education requires that the students should have as large a field as possible for their observation and diagnosis of disease.

These considerations have so much weight with the profession, that it is as a body extremely jealous of any alteration in the present out-patient departments. I do not wish to underrate the seriousness of the objections urged; but I cannot help thinking that the scheme which I have ventured to propound, supposing it to be established in its entirety, will fully meet them. If all difficult cases are sent on to the hospitals from the Poor-Law institutions and the provident dispensaries, and the medical officers in charge of those agencies could have little inducement to refrain from sending on all suitable patients, if the

cost were not charged on the local rates of the union but defrayed out of the common Poor-Fund, the collecting and sifting process will be as complete as at present. The net indeed will be actually larger; for it will embrace not only those who now apply to the hospitals, but also those who go straight to the Poor-Law dispensary or infirmary, and whose cases are now from the point of view of science almost entirely wasted. Moreover the medical schools would gain by the change. The local separation of the infirmary from the hospital might, it is true, cause some inconvenience; but this disadvantage would be outweighed by the opportunity afforded to the students of gaining experience in the treatment of the chronic patients of the infirmary, a class of which they see little in the wards of the hospitals.

Before leaving this subject it should be noted that the admission of students to the Poor-Law infirmaries would not be effected without the repeal of the section of a statute by which it is at present prohibited. But no serious difficulty need be apprehended from this cause. By the Poor-Law Act of 1889 the hospitals managed by the Metropolitan Asylums Board have already been thrown open to students. Why they should ever have been excluded it seems difficult to say. Probably the Lords' explanation is the correct one.

The existing prohibition on the admission of students is not found in the statute under which the infirmaries have been established, but was, the Committee believe, inserted in a subsequent Act in consequence of a fear that the poor would object to their presence. The experience, however, of the large hospitals does not seem to give any countenance to this opinion, and the evidence of witnesses of long experience in visiting the sick poor was altogether opposed to it. Indeed, the presence of a great many "doctors" attending to his case is said to be in many cases a source of positive satisfaction to the patient.

Though the inherent objections to the scheme thus sketched in outline are, I venture to think, comparatively unimportant, it is clear that its advocates have much uphill work before

them if it is ever to become more than a scheme. Unless we are doomed to a much severer system of paternal legislation than that with which we are as yet threatened (in which case changes of a much more socialistic nature than those here suggested would probably be made) it is useless to look for the accomplishment of this programme until a large section of the governing bodies of the hospitals have adopted these views. Hitherto both the governors and the medical staff alike have, for the most part, refused to look at the question from the social side. They contend, and much no doubt can be said for the contention, that they would be departing from their proper province if they devoted their attention to anything except the treatment of disease. The doctors indeed, brought as they are into contact with the outward and visible signs of distress, feel great commiseration for the poverty of their patients, and, as individuals, are interested in the administration of immediate relief given through such agencies as their Samaritan Funds, but they consider that they have no time to go further in this direction, and to inquire into the causes of that poverty. Hence, in the absence of any serious convictions on the subject, some of them allow such minor considerations as the increased independence of manner on the part of patients which is likely to result from payment by them, to prejudice their minds against the imposition of any regular charge for admission.

Their pecuniary difficulties however may in the end force the hospital authorities to look at the question from the standpoint of the social economist; and though the uncertainty of their incomes, supplied as they are to a great extent from legacies, has hitherto militated against any serious effort on their part to adapt their expenditure to their means, I note with satisfaction one exceptional case which proves the truth of my assertion. The governors of Guy's Hospital are, or believe themselves to be, independent of public support. With them the problem is merely

to adjust their expenditure to a fairly ascertained income. That income however has in recent years, owing to the depreciation of their property, been gradually but considerably reduced. What is the result? Not only do we find that at Guy's, as compared with the other hospitals, domestic economy is practised (*e.g.* their expenditure per bed on alcohol is less by about one-half than that of the other hospitals), but they have actually taken a practical step in the direction now advocated. Their independence of subscriptions enabled the governors, some years ago, to introduce the rule, to which I have already alluded, by which all out-patients are required to pay threepence a week for medicine, unless they produce a certificate of poverty from the Charity Organisation Society. This is a small payment, and in 1887 produced only £631, but the step has much social significance.

But the hospital authorities are not the only forces with which it will be necessary to reckon. If they were unanimous in their desire for the suggested alterations, the co-operation of the Local Government Board and of the Charity Commissioners (so far as their sanction might be required for the requisite changes in the administration of the endowed hospitals) could probably be obtained. But on the part of many of the Boards of Guardians opposition might be anticipated. The successful working of the proposed scheme could not be assured without a considerable improvement in the buildings, and strengthening of the staffs, in many of the Poor-Law unions; and when it is considered how long the Bethnal Green Guardians have succeeded in resisting the pressure brought to bear upon them both by their own officers and by the Local Government Board, and how persistently they have refused even to build an infirmary separate from the workhouse, it is impossible to doubt that on the introduction of any large innovation great difficulties would be caused by the action or inaction of some of the Boards.

It is probable, therefore, that the adoption of this scheme by the hospitals would lead to some hardships during the first few years of the experiment, and until the poorer class of patients had learnt to combine more generally into provident associations. This hardship would, however, be minimised if the hospitals began by imposing a very small payment, and raised the charge annually until the proper limit was reached. The threepence charged at Guy's is found to deter very few patients; and we must not forget that the Poor-Law Guardians are legally bound to provide proper medical treatment for all destitute persons without reference to the action of the hospitals. If, therefore, free treatment at the hospitals were discontinued public opinion would soon compel the guardians to adapt their institutions to the requirements of the district.

The obstacles in the path of the reformer are great, and the present question affords, as I have admitted, no exception to the rule. The need however of some reform in our hospital-system is acknowledged on all hands. No modification less radical than that embodied in the scheme here indicated in outline, seems able to remove the difficulties which are now felt; and to show that such a scheme is susceptible of practical adoption has been the object of this paper. Its accomplishment will be more than half secured when the hospital authorities are converted to its desirability; and it is because the appointment of such a Central Board as is suggested by the Lords' Committee seems likely to tend in this direction that its recommendation should be welcome. A single organisation is better able than a number of distinct societies to form and formulate an enlightened opinion; and if the constitution of the new body is sufficiently representative, its influence over the governors of the hospitals will be great.

H. CLARENCE BOURNE.

HOW PHŒBE CAME HOME.

I.

IN the days of old Sir Vincent Leicester, grandfather of the present baronet, the pretty, tree-shaded farmhouse where afterwards the Randles lived, was inhabited by a large family named Verrill. At that time the Leicesters were the only "quality" in Everwell, and they divided Church and State between them, Sir Vincent reigning at "the Heights," and his twin brother at the parsonage which afterwards knew Mr. Bryant. Next door to the parsonage lived Mr. Bence the sexton, Parson Leicester's right hand; and exactly opposite at the park lodge was old Sir Vincent's right hand, Simon Verrill, eldest son of the farmer. Simon intended Bence to marry his second sister Phœbe, and had himself wedded Susan the sexton's sister, a very "saving" young woman who, having brought her husband a fair dowry, esteemed herself highly in consequence.

This district is up on the moorland overlooking the sea. The waves at high tide bathe the foot of the cliff and have even hollowed it out beneath; at low water, flat, shaly rocks uncover themselves, and it is possible between tides to get round from Everwell Bay to Tanswick, the next village farther south. Ages ago the beck made an exit for itself through the porous rock, and a little red-roofed fishing hamlet, called quite simply "the Bay" grew round its mouth, nestling in the hollow and with just enough strand for the cobbles to be hauled up high and dry for the Sunday rest. There is a steep stony road from Everwell proper to this its low-lying suburb, up which in the early morning herring-carts clatter; otherwise in the old days it was not much travelled, for Everwell and the

Bay were ill neighbours. The fisherfolk were uncouth, proud, and wild, with little respect for their landlord, and none at all for such persons as Bence or Simon Verrill.

In those days no farming folk in X—shire gave themselves airs. Mrs. Verrill made her own cakes, and the boys and girls worked on the land. They were all, except one, simple and stolid; like the horses which drew the plough and carried the corn, season by season, without complaint and without emotion. The exception was Phœbe. She was a freak of nature, a personification perhaps of the wild moorland breeze, the freshness of the salt foam, the brilliance of the summer sun. Phœbe had a haughty carriage of her head, and a sharp tongue which frightened the village; she was tall and slim, with rosy cheeks and flashing eyes; a fresh, untamed, unfettered creature, whose instincts were her guide and whose will was her law. Habit and precedent were nothing to Phœbe. That the Verrills had "always done so" made nothing a duty to her; that she had done a thing herself imposed on her no obligation to do it again. Proud of his handsome daughter was the farmer; but Phœbe frightened her mother, that good woman preferring cheerful, sandy-haired, freckled Mary Anne, who was only one year older and perfectly staid and dependable. Phœbe soon disliked Mary Anne, and Simon, equally admirable, was her pet aversion; nevertheless the solid virtues of her family and the atmosphere of smug success in her home told unconsciously upon the girl. She was aware of her aloofness, and had in her heart a sense of having deliberately chosen the wrong way, which might in the future prove her ruin.

Phœbe began early to have lovers.

The young man at the shop always gave her a dash more sugar or currants than she demanded; the tailor, who was also the barber, sent her valentines and scented pincushions. She refused Mr. Bence. To the grocer she said: "I don't like your look; it minds me of Mary Anne." And to the tailor (who had a very respectable mother) she said much what she had said to Miss Leicester when asked to take service at the Heights: "No, I can't do with brooms and dusters, and notable housekeeping women. I'd be mad if I couldn't run down to the beach evenings, and have a look when the boats are putting out."

Life within doors, comfortable, regular, confined, was not for Phœbe. For her the roaring sea and the rugged cliff; the spray, crisping her tangled hair; the wild wind howling down the night, making her heart beat and her soul pant in fierce exultation.

When a child she would take her way down to the shore to hear the boom of the waves, and to watch evening spreading her wings over the restless sea. There was a certain deep pool she liked which was never emptied by the retiring tide, and in which was a waving forest of green and brown, purple and pink and golden leafage, with anemones spreading their petals to the gentle ripple, blue shells glistening, shrimps and gobies darting from side to side. Matt Laverick had suggested to Phœbe to bend over the still waters of this pool and find her own face at home in its fairy halls. For it was young Matt Laverick, the fisherman's son, who used to lie in wait for Phœbe on the scar at sunset time when the sea was still far out. Matt was fascinated by the mysteries of that tideless pool, and his little sailing-boat was forgotten as he peered into its transparent depths. "It can't be for fishes only, Phœbe," he would say; and often the two young things were to be seen lying side by side, face downward on the spray-driven rock, watching the waving sea-weeds as if expecting some rich, strange,

living wonder to appear among them and demand explanation of their intrusive gaze.

As they grew older it was only on Sundays that the boy and girl met at their childish trysting-place. Phœbe could not so often steal unobserved to the Bay, and Matt was off at the drift fishing. But she still sometimes watched his outfaring sail from her post on the scar, or with the fisherwomen would lend a hand to push his coble down the steep beach, over the oars according to custom. She was well-known to the fisher-folk, and, being a good hater, she had among them also an antipathy.

This object of her dislike was a golden-haired, ruddy-faced girl of her own age, whom Phœbe in her heart thought the prettiest lass in the Bay. She also was a Laverick, a cousin of Matt's, and with her widowed mother she presided over the great vats of the net-dyeing establishment behind the beach. Liz Laverick's fingers, her cotton gown, and her sun-bonnet were all stained red, and she was seldom seen without a coil of russet nets round her as she stepped backwards and forwards between the boats and the vats, or leaned over the latter stirring the boiling contents with a long pole. But the warm brown was becoming to her rosy face, and Liz was a favourite with the fishermen. She was a good creature, who would have done anything to help any one, and who had slaved for her mother and the bairns since the day her father had been drowned within sight of home. For much toil Liz had found compensation in much masculine society, and in unlimited coquetry of which the freedom was half envied and wholly detested by that haughty inland maiden Phœbe Verrill. The worst of it was that Matt Laverick himself, who had succeeded to the command of his uncle's boat *The Homeward Bound*, and who ruled over his aunt's family, took apparently no exception to his cousin's manner. "Why, lass," he said, expostulatingly to

Phœbe, "haven't you a hunderd sweet-hearts your own self?" Phœbe was bitterly offended and would not speak to Matt for a week. To her passionate heart the possession of more than one lover was no matter of pleasure. The instinct to flirtation was not in her, and she made scant allowance for it in other people. The tailor, the grocer, Mr. Bence, and the ploughman insulted her with their suits. She could patiently endure no lover but Matt Laverick, the fisherman.

Phœbe Verrill was seventeen when she ran away from home. One evening she did not return from her usual solitary stroll at the end of her day's work, and upon inquiry was found to have sailed away with Laverick at sundown in the fishing-coble, without the nets, and without his mates who were lounging about on a holiday, a week's earnings tossed to them by their young captain in their pockets. The farmer, and Simon, and the whole Verrill family were furious, and appealed to Sir Vincent and the parson, to Mr. Bence and the tailor, and to everybody, in vain. It was never explained where the guilty pair sailed that evening, nor how they spent the succeeding days. But after a week they returned to the Bay and Matt went to work again. Phœbe wore a short petticoat over bare feet, and a gold ring on her finger. They established themselves together in a half-ruinous cottage standing solitarily close to the waves, and henceforth at sunrise Phœbe was to be seen in the doorway watching with her hand over her eyes for the return of *The Homeward Bound*.

After a time there was a baby with her, who kicked in the warm sand at her feet as she mended the nets, or sat on her shoulder as she stepped down with the other women to the boat-launching. He was soon old enough to toddle beside her, when she bore her pail to the beck, or carried the nets to Liz for fresh dyeing. And among many pretty children, Matt Laverick's Tim was soon conspicuous.

Phœbe seldom visited her mother at the farm; never Mary Anne who had married the schoolmaster, nor brother Simon at the lodge. She had chosen her part, were it the worse or the better way; had descended in the social scale, but had gained freedom and sea-music, a merry heart, her fisherman and her child. What more did she want?

II.

THERE came a day when Phœbe climbed the cliff again to the inland village. She resumed her daily work on her father's farm; and, with her little merman, settled down in a vacant cottage once used by a shepherd in the narrow unwooded glen behind her childhood's home. Matt Laverick remained at the Bay.

What had happened? No one very well knew, for Phœbe had never been one to talk of her own affairs, and she was now more silent than of old. She mixed with her kindred as little as possible, though she listened to their censure; obeyed them with proud humility, and worked harder than before. The barber, still celibate, never summoned up courage to express his sympathy or to ask what her "man" had done to her. She was more austere apart to her admirers than in the fierceness of her maidenhood. If the young gentlemen at the Heights or the parsonage looked out for the beautiful creature carrying the water-jar from the stream, no smile now wreathed her proud lips when she saw them. She sang no more, and always Tim was at her side pulling at her gown and protecting her with his baby presence. There was war between the little merman and his fair-haired cousins. He belonged to another race.

Phœbe demanded outdoor work from her father; sowing, reaping, even stepping over the stiff clay beside the plough. She milked the cows also and led them to pasture, but would not set foot in the dairy. One thing was certain: she never now descended the

cliff to the Bay; never stood on the scar at eventide to watch the outfaring sails; never visited the wind-blown hut where she had sung to Matt Laverick. His name seldom crossed her lips, nor was she known to speak to him. He seemed to have passed out of her life, and there was only Tim to recall him to her mind.

As for Matt, he changed visibly. His head became bent, his gait slouching, his tones hollow. He dwelt on in Phoebe's cottage by the waves, but he was seldom seen there. When his mates were glad to land, he stayed out at sea. He vanished for days sometimes. He fought with the coastguard. It was rumoured that he was taking to drink. Matt was fast becoming an outcast, his hand against every man, every man's hand against him.

But after dark sometimes, when he had sent off his boat with his mate in command and a strange hand to make up the crew, he would climb the cliff and make his way along the narrow path skirting the lonely glen, till he had knocked at Phoebe's door. Once, supposing him to be her brother Bill whom she was expecting with firewood, she opened. Matt entered. He flung his arms round her and kissed her, for he was stronger than she. He first pleaded, then got angry; stormed and swore at her, pinched and twisted her arm till it was bruised and swollen. At last Phoebe spoke: "That's enoff, lad. Thee can go now. I doan't want no more of thee."

"I've a mind to stick my knife in thee!" cried Matt, furiously.

"'Deed, lad, and I wish you would," said Phoebe.

Matt, perhaps afraid to stay with the knife in his vest, left her and fled, springing from slope to slope of the quick descent, as if the bogeys, a very real terror to the boldest of the Everwell fishermen, were in full cry after him. Next night he presented himself again.

"Lass, lass, I woan't com in without

thee wish it, but I didn't mean it about the knife. Say one word and give me one kiss, Phoebe."

She kept the door locked, and hardened her heart.

Matt Laverick lay in the storm and the rain outside her door that night, and many another in the fitful moonlight, which turned familiar rocks and bushes into changeful monsters watching him from dens and caverns. He trembled at the strange noises which, if heard at all in the bustle of day, are explained and justified by the sunshine. He lay awake, almost forgetting Phoebe in the tingling dread of the darkness, yet scorning his terrors and too proud to move; keeping his eyes fixed on the heavens and omitting from sight the unaccustomed distinctness of the black hill-tops. Towards morning he sank into an uneasy slumber, to wake with a start as he saw the cold glare of dawn patterning the sky, and shrinking all the visions and demons of the night to their natural, definite, and insignificant shapes and places. They seemed now to lie around him like corpses which a few hours before had been alive and menacing. Matt was frightened still, and shuddered with horror at every natural object which, so prosaic now, only required night to appear huge and black and horrible, intelligent and living, with a life and a mind hostile to his own.

When the sun had risen Phoebe opened her door and stepped out, Tim in her arms, to her work. On seeing Matt, ghastly after his night among the hillside ghosts, she controlled a start and brushed past him without a word. Then the fisherman sprang to his feet and sped down the ravine with unpausing step, dealing fierce blows to the stones and shrubs as he passed. He was on the shore in time to see his boat come in; to count and sell the fish, to float the coble in a still haven at the mouth of the beck, and wash it out with no helper but Joe, Liz Laverick's lame brother; while Liz herself looked on from her dye-vats behind and tossed light chaffing sentences down to him,

their tone softened by the distance and the echo from the water.

Two or three months passed ; then Matt Laverick's importunities suddenly ended. There was a fight one day in the Bay ; a girl, golden-haired Liz herself, had been molested, chased, and frightened, and a rescuer had come in the person of Matt Laverick. There had followed a scuffle between him and the aggressor, ending, by accident, fatally for the latter. Then Matt was charged, tried, and sentenced to six months' hard labour. Phœbe was present at his trial. She held her head high and made no remark to any one. She was pale, but her eyes shone ; and there were some who thought her glad to see her lad disgraced. As they led him away, Matt, who had till now stared straight before him with an assumption of dogged indifference, raised his look and met her eyes. The blood rushed over his bronzed face and he stopped abruptly, stretching involuntarily towards her his handcuffed arms. But nothing more could pass between them, and Matt was taken away to prison.

Phœbe, with her head erect and her breath coming in short gasps, passed out through the crowd. She did not return straight home ; for once her work was neglected. She went down to the seaside where Matt was no longer about to molest her. She passed her old cottage. It was locked up, Matt's dog Bo'sun, a huge fierce mongrel lying on the step. Tim broke from his mother and ran over to touch him, for the dog and the child had kept up a sort of acquaintance ; but Phœbe walked straight on without attention.

She went to her old place on the scar. Boys were fishing with lines from the rocks, a few bathing in the shallow waves, all reminding her of Matt. A bare-footed, curly-headed pair of eight and ten, a boy and girl, were sailing a boat on the seaweed pool and looking for water-babies in its depth. Were they a younger Phœbe Verrill and Matt Laverick ?

The woman sat apart and silent, her

head on her knees. If she saw the waves, felt the sea breeze, heard the shrill cry of the gulls and the babble of the children, all that had once filled her with keen joy, she neither cared nor noticed. Even Tim was forgotten. He toddled away over the rocks, poking the anemones, catching the crabs, trailing after him long pennons of brown seaweed. He would have joined the pair with the boat, but the girl threw a handful of wet sand in his face, and frightened him by crying out, "Where's your da, Tim Laverick ? Where's they took him away to ?" Tim had only a vague consciousness of being mocked, but he retreated to his mother ; and when, warned by the tide, Phœbe rose and slowly dragged her child homewards, he whimpered a little, and said, "Won't my da want us, mother ? Can't we stay by the sea ?"

At the question, Phœbe's hot tears burst out in a great flood, but still she hardened her heart and answered : "No, Tim, it isn't thee nor me thy da wants. Don't thee be thinking on him, bairn. Let him be, let him be."

After this things went on much as before. Phœbe resumed her farm work, and Tim wore a smock, far less comfortable than the jersey of his father's race. But the phase of unnatural docility was over. Phœbe's outward amenableness cloaked a rebellious heart, and in little things her waywardness returned. She was sharp with her sisters, and at enmity with Simon. She took a dislike to her cottage, and in the evenings would roam away with her boy among the dells and woods, over moorland and pasture ; sometimes down to the shore where she was to be seen watching with grand disdain the boats, the wild birds, and the tossing sea. But she never spoke of Matt, nor exchanged a needless word with old acquaintances. Miss Leicester said the dreadful man had driven poor pretty Phœbe mad, and the country people shook their heads and whispered together when she passed. Only the little tailor remained faithful in his admiration ; he brought her

flowers from his mother's garden and made Tim's clothes for nothing. And the young gentlemen from the Heights still smiled when they met her carrying the water-jar for the farmhouse from the beck.

III.

THE six months were ending, and the Verrills began to question among themselves what was to be done when Matt Laverick was at large again. How could respectable folk survive the propinquity of a "jailed prisoner," who had forced himself into the family and made himself father to one of its descendants? The farmer consulted the parson and Sir Vincent; the parson consulted Sir Vincent and Mr. Bence; Sir Vincent consulted the parson and Simon. No one had any practical suggestion to make, and Simon blackened poor Matt a few shades darker, and abused his sister. "Phæbe was allays possessed, sir," he said, "and I see now it was the devil as possessed her." To his mother he discoursed piously on the wicked way she had brought Phæbe up, making no moral barricade against the ill spirits always waiting to enter in and possess any handsome womankind. But not even Simon had the courage to say much to Phæbe herself.

"Miss at the Heights thinks her mind has giv' way," said Mrs. Verrill apprehensively. "Happen she's forgot all about him. Eh dear! who'd ever have thought, father, your daughter'd have turned out bad! Then thar's that Tim. I wonder God Almighty didn't visit him with the fever astead of Mary Anne's Johnnie. That Tim'll be doing us a mischief one of these days with his black fisher-blood in him."

"I doubt he's a healthy chap," replied the farmer. "Thar's no getting done with him in a hurry, with or without God Almighty. But I'm thinking yon Matt Laverick's an open enemy to the Almighty, that He can't for conscience' sake leave him

about much longer. I'm thinking 'spectable folk like we must have more of a chance with God Almighty than yon Matt Laverick."

It was Christmas Eve; and for the first time in her life Phæbe was alone, without prospect of a kiss under the mistletoe or of a smile from friend or lover, saving only from little Tim. This year the boisterous preparation for Christmas at the farm had seemed to increase the desolation of her own position. The family conclave was still in progress—Mrs. Verrill and the girls in tears, the farmer and Simon quarrelling—when Phæbe herself appeared among them. She walked into the large square hall where her family were assembled, and throwing one scornful look around divined that the loud tones and the sobbings were all about herself. Then she folded her arms and stood in the midst of them, Tim clinging to her gown. The family looked at her, and then looked at each other, each one afraid to open the combat. At last Mrs. Simon spoke; she wore a new cloak which Miss Leicester had given her, and held a new prayer-book in her hand. She rose and said: "My dear Phæbe, to-morrow is Christmas and the Lord's Sabbath as well. It's fitting you should go to church and pray the Lord to forgive you. I will call for you, Phæbe, and take you with us."

"'Deed and I won't go to church," replied Phæbe.

"My dear," said her mother, tearfully, "you will eat dinner with us, won't you, seeing it'll be Christmas Day?"

"I want no dinner, mother," answered Phæbe; "I want no merryings. If you give me dinners and presents I know well it ben't acause you like me. I'll walk out and look at the sea and think I'm dancing in a boat. That's all the Christmasing I want."

"Phæbe, girl," said the farmer, "mother and I been turning it over, and we think you'd better go out of

t'country. Sir Vincent'll help you to a place in a shop, Sandside way. You can live there a decent widow woman, and I'll help you with Tim's schooling."

"I never was one for sitting in shops," said Phœbe, "and I ben't a widow woman to begin it. If you and mother think I've disgraced you, you must just put up with it."

"Ay, and you did disgrace us, Phœbe," shouted Simon; "after all your breeding and going to parson's church, and might have took service at the Heights and been wedded with Bence,—running off with that lout as was dirt to the likes of us. I can't abear the sound of his outlandish name."

"You'll have to put up with it," said Phœbe.

Then Bill, who was better natured, made an attempt. "I'm going to Sandside early, Phœbe, to fetch my Bessie to mother's plum-pudding. You'd better come too and get Bessie's kin to find you a place. For your man's coming out of the jail next week, and it ben't decent for you to bide here longer."

"Being nearer concerned nor you, Bill," said Phœbe sharply, "happen I've counted the days oftener and better nor you. Matt's not coming out next week."

"You've gone astray, Phœbe, atween calendar and lunar, and don't understand how they reckon jailments. It's hard enoff for decent folks unused to prison ways. But I'm right, for Simon asked last time he was in Uggle Grinby along of squire's horse-fairing. We wasn't going to have that man coming out of jail on us at onawares. And my Bessie's mother——"

"I don't care *that* for your Bessie's mother," said Phœbe, snapping her fingers; "and Simon comes home that fuddled from Uggle Grinby, it's a miracle Sir Vincent has a horse to his stable. I'd never believe nothing along of Simon learning it in Uggle Grinby. Now listen to me all of you,

for I come up here to speak myself and not to hear talkings of what don't concern none of you. Mother," said Phœbe, turning round and speaking in slightly quivering tones, "for all you're vexed with me, you'll have to help me to-morrow. I've a long, long way to fare and I'll have to fare alone. Tim can't never walk nine mile to Uggle Grinby and nine mile back. You'll have to keep him; and you'll let him have a sup of ale, mother, and a slice of Christmas pudding. And doan't let them white-faced lambs of Simon's bairns anger him. Mother, it's not next week Matt Laverick's coming out of the jail; it's to-morrow, Sunday, Christmas Day. And I mean to meet him and walk back to Everwell with him myself."

Then arose a cry of furious dismay at sound of which Phœbe crossed her arms on her breast and resumed her defiant attitude.

"Lass!" exclaimed Mrs. Verrill, lifting her hands in horror, "you're never going back to yon awful, drunken, fighting, swearing man!"

"I won't hear a word agen him, mother," said Phœbe; "no, I am not going back to him. I doan't mean to live with him never no more. But all the Christmasing I'm going to have is to take him out of the jail and bring him home myself to Everwell Bay."

Mrs. Verrill burst into loud weeping again; Simon shook his fist at his sister and the farmer called out: "I'll take all the work from you, Phœbe, you gipsy; you sha'n't never com here agen if you let that man out of the jail on us at onawares."

But the girl did not listen. She was hurrying Tim home to his supper and his bed, restless in mind herself as she had not been since that evening long ago preceding her flight with Matt Laverick. Ah! how happy she had been then! What a joyous life she was going to have! How ready she had been to face the whole world with Matt by her side! And here she was, facing the world indeed,

but without him. He had disappointed, offended her past bearing; and now she meant to live with him no more. But she stood long to-night in the cold moonlight at her cottage door, absorbed in one strong, half delirious joy. She was going to see her Matt to-morrow. She would let him kiss her,—once, and they would talk for a few minutes. It was long since she had had that much happiness—long, very long.

Next morning she rose before the sun, and put on her neatest inland Sunday gown, her prim bonnet, and for the first time her tidy cotton gloves; meaning Matt to see them all and to understand from them that her heart was still hard, and that she meant to live with him no more. An east wind was blowing and driving the waves furiously against the cliffs. Tim wanted to go and look at them, but his mother dragged his unwilling feet to the farm, and left him there. Then she trudged wearily the nine long miles to Uggie Grinby, through the bitter wind which occasionally flung lashing rain-drops across her face. Though Phæbe was strong and tireless in work she was unused to a long tramp of this kind, and became footsore and exhausted, sick to death of her good clothes and Sunday boots.

At last she reached the prison-gates and rang the great clanging bell, and wished for little Tim to support her spirits; for with all her pride Phæbe was shy, and to-day full of unwonted nervousness.

"Matt Laverick, the fisher," said Phæbe, in her best accent, "he is coming out to-day, isn't he? How soon will it be? Will you tell him his Phæbe's awaiting? And may I sit down a bit while I'm waiting, for I've come a long step?"

Prison warders are no doubt tender-hearted like other men. But Mr. Horsfall was also a person of dignity, unused to free-and-easy requests from the prisoners' friends. Moreover it was a grievance with him that he had to do any work on Christmas Day; and

Phæbe, thin, pale, and weary, did not look her best just then; nor did she, in Mr. Horsfall's opinion, wear her Sunday clothes with the distinction of an Uggie Grinby female. So he regarded her with contempt and made no effort to soften his reply: "Sunday birds all released Saturday night; man's gone;" and he banged the gate in Phæbe's face and went back to his Christmas breakfast of hot tripe, leaving her outside with a great desolation in her heart.

Poor Phæbe! Nine weary miles and a parting from Tim, and all for naught. Matt was not here. He was free, and he had not come to her. Where was he? Had he gone to golden-haired Liz, who understood his fisher-ways, who was so ready with her kisses, in whose behalf he had fought and suffered?

After a long time she again set forth, slowly, homewards, through the driving gale. Weary Christmasing was this!

The farm-house party were at dinner when Phæbe returned, all save Bill, whose chair by Sandside Bessie was empty. "Come in, my lass, come in!" cried the farmer, jolly under the influence of Christmas cheer and a foaming beer-jug. "You've been on a goose's chase, but a cut from a goose's wing 'll settle you. Don't stand there like a scarecrow, or neighbour Bartholomew here will never believe you war the prettiest lass inland till you runned off with a drunken boatman."

"He'll never be so fond of the drink as you, father," said Phæbe, "nor it never made *him* impudent. I want no geese with you. Give me my Tim, mother, and let me go."

Mrs. Verrill rose, looking frightened and uncertain. "Go on, Eliza," she said; and Eliza muttered: "Go on, mother," and looked away from her sister, crammng her mouth as if resolved not to utter another word. "Phæbe, lass," said Mrs. Verrill, "it warn't my fault, but Tim's that contrary and spiteful, thar's no doing

with him. He wouldn't come to dinner not for plum-pudding nor nothing, but must needs run off a-playing by hisself."

Phœbe turned away apathetically. Tim was, no doubt, in the yard throwing stones at the fowl. But Fanny, her mouth full almost as Eliza's, called out, "Bill's gone to seek him," in a hasty tone which told the mother Tim's loss was less recent than Mrs. Verrill had led her to suppose. She faced them again. "And you're all a-feasting there and looking at father drinking," she said, "and you don't know where my Tim is! You're lucky, mother, if your pretty lass ever darkens your doors agen."

"We didn't none of us want your brat," cried Simon, who had had a good pull at the ale too. "He's like his father—a fighting, swearing, spitting tom-cat of a devil, like Matt Laverick."

"Doan't you be taking Matt Laverick's name in your mouth," said Phœbe; "you hadn't the courage to fight him when you were lads, Simon, and I greatly misdoubt your having the courage now."

And she went out to find her Tim, not anxiously, but a little crossly, for she was very weary. Tim, however, was not in the yard with the fowl; nor in the shed with the cows; nor in the glenside cottage; nor on the hill with the sheep. Nor was he making mud-pies by the beck, nor looking for his da's sails from the cliff. Phœbe was so tired that she could not believe in his disappearance. It was some stupidity of her own that she could not find him. She quickened her steps, however, and began to feel sick at heart.

IV.

PHŒBE went to the Heights, for Tim had twice ere now got into the garden, and amused himself pulling the choicest flowers. But he was not there to-day, nor by the housekeeper's fire; nor had any one seen him roaming through the park.

"Why, dear me! it's Phœbe Verrill!" cried Miss Leicester, who always on Christmas Day was overflowing with goodwill and nervous importance, and who was now engaged in bearing a magnificent cake to the servants. "My good girl, what's the matter?" And she asked all sorts of needless questions, though Phœbe was on thorns to continue her search, and her patience soon dissolved into incivility. "Now, Phœbe, I know exactly what you had better do," said Miss Leicester, taking the unwilling mother to the drawing-room, and seating her on a spring chair, which gave Phœbe an alarming sense of insecurity. "You just trust yourself to me, will you?"

"Anything in reason, miss," said Phœbe, trying to be meek; "so long as it's for finding Matt Laverick's pretty Tim."

"He *is* pretty," said Miss Leicester with a vague recollection of a little brown, active body running at Phœbe's feet like a foal beside its mother; and then she went off into a siding about some socks she proposed to knit for him, if Phœbe could select a colour she liked from some specimens of wool on the table.

"Miss, will you tell me how to look for my little Tim?" said Phœbe.

"Oh, to be sure, I was forgetting!" said the kind lady, taking Phœbe's hand in hers, and then lamenting over her tired appearance after her walk to Uggie Grinby, and saying she could have told her about the Sunday prisoners being released on Saturday. "But yes!" added Miss Leicester hastily, seeing Phœbe try to struggle out of the soft chair, "about Tim, this is what I propose: I'll send a message to James, the groom, who is a most good-natured man, and I think must have quite finished his dinner by this time, and he will look about for you; and you must stay here and get a good rest, and I'll order up some meat and pudding, for you must be dreadfully hungry. What are you doing?" asked Miss Leicester, for

with flashing eyes Phœbe was making her way to the door, hardly pausing to say : "Miss, I see now why you wasn't marrying woman. No man in his senses would want *you* to mother his children. My Tim's lost and out in the cold and the storm and the rain, and you talk of wool-patterns, and setting in chairs, and eating pudding. Let me be, miss. You don't know how to help me."

Poor Miss Leicester, who was only thirty-two, was much offended, and a little distressed by her failure. "Dear ! dear !" she said ; "how curiously rude the lower orders are !"

Phœbe returned to the farm, bewildered by her want of success. "Oh, mother, mother !" she cried. "Why did you let him go out ? I can't find him anywhere."

Knowing they were in fault the worthy folk were cross. "You should never have had a brat with fisher-blood in him," said the farmer. "You shouldn't have gone after that rascal scamp this morning when we told you 'twas the wrong day, and then you wouldn't have lost your brat."

"Eh, Phœbe, dear !" said her mother. "It's Christmas, and he's in his liquor. Don't you mind him."

"You all think it," said Phœbe, "so it don't hurt me much for father to say it. But I'm not going to do without my Tim. It 'ud be righter for you and Eliza and Fanny to stop your merrying, and come and find him, for you promised to keep him safe and you haven't done it."

"Eh, dear !" said Eliza, tired as people are apt to be on Christmas evening. "Bill's been seeking this three hour ; and it's nigh church time. You're so full of Christmas, Phœbe, you've forgot it's the Sabbath."

"Mother !" cried Phœbe, "you've had children, if Eliza hasn't. How can you sit thar and let her talk to me so ?"

"My dear ! my dear !" sobbed the poor fat woman, taking off her cap, "I do feel for you. I'll come and help

you. But I'm not good at climbing, Phœbe, and if I come someun 'll have to walk aside me, or I'll be breaking my neck, and that won't comfort you for Tim, my dear, will it ? Fanny, fetch me my bonnet. Not the best un. I doubt I must give up church for to-night. And fetch your own, girls, for shame ! It's becoming to help Phœbe this time."

Meantime Phœbe flew off to the lodge, thinking that her eldest brother could assist her better than any one, if he only would.

"Simon, 'twas yon flour-faced lad of yourn that angered him. Are you no going to help me, when I've been walking since five o'clock, and have naught but troubles in my heart ?"

"Phœbe," said Simon, didactically, for he was a little fuddled, "your troubles is all of your own hatching. I suppose Tim has gone into the sea. Most all the bad comes out of that and find its way back agen. I never were one for dieting on fish, and mother's goose 'ud have digested a deal better if she hadn't prelooded it with that great hulking cod. It's like Matt Laverick, hard to swallow, and harder still to forget."

"I'm going to church, Phœbe," said the prim sister-in-law. "You'd better come too, and pray that your son may be kept from the paths of the destroyer."

"'Deed, and if I'd prayed agen the destroyer this morning," said Phœbe, "God wouldn't have let the bairn near you. Won't nobody help me ? I have naught but Tim left, and you were all proud of me once, and now you won't none of you help me !"

The greater part of the family did turn out after this, with much grumbling among themselves. The farmer was really too much stupefied to go far. He struggled hither and thither for a short while, retracing his steps, and looking in obvious places where he had looked before. At last he stumbled back to the parlour fire, whither his poor fat wife had also returned, very tired, very unhappy, and only able to cry.

Farmer Verrill took some more beer, and then said oracularly, in somewhat thickened tones: "Yon Matt Laverick's come out of jail, and he ha'n't come after Phæbe. Happen she's done with him. Yon Tim's lost. It's quicker nor scarlet fever, and not catching. Happen she's done with him. She's a fine lass yet. Happen we're done with they Lavericks. And the tailor's a single man still."

"Eh, Johnnie, dear!" cried his wife, "don't, for God's sake, talk of that fashion to Phæbe, or you'll drive her clean out of her senses. She'll be jumping into the sea once they Lavericks be done with."

"She's a fine lass," repeated the father, shaking his head regretfully.

The fact then was now recognised; Tim was lost. An active, clever boy, who knew his way about, something must have happened to him, or he would long ago have been safe by his mother's fire. Every one had believed in his spontaneous return, and for a good while even Phæbe was not frightened; to hunt about for her naughty child had seemed merely the culminating point of her day's misfortunes. But now alarm rose in her breast, and she sickened with vague apprehension.

Phæbe wandered alone. The helpers were too slow for her, felt with her too little. Because she was in the depths, every one was to-day courageous to chide her and to point the moral of her woe. And they were apathetic in the search, first telling her lightly that Tim was safe to return, then changing their tune, shaking their heads, and assuring her further search was useless. For the feeling was strong that Matt Laverick and Tim, the visible sign of her passion for the fisherman, were a disgrace to her; much better expunged together from her life; or, perhaps, it was only because it was Sunday and Christmas Day combined, and folk were too comfortable in their homes, and tight packed in their stomachs, and religious in their souls, to have any loose sympathy about

them. Another day the search might have been a not unpleasant diversion; to-night there were other things on hand, and spiced ale is pleasant, and stories round a Christmas fire.

"My good woman," said Sir Vincent, when in her wandering Phæbe met him and his eldest son, "I hear Laverick is at large again; you must trust us to defend you from him. From what I learn, I am driven to the opinion that there was irregularity in your wedding. Perhaps we can get you clear of him altogether and free to marry some steady fellow, who deserves such a pretty wife,—and who has repented now," added the baronet, for propriety's sake.

"Sir," said Phæbe, offended, "I'm unused to hear no one but Matt Laverick make remarks on my prettiness, and I will not bear it from no one. And you'll not go meddling with my marriage, which was regular enoff for me. If you like to help me to find my Tim, you may do that. I want naught else."

Sir Vincent, feeling snubbed, excused himself, and went to church to sleep off the effects of his plum-pudding. Mr. Charles lingered a moment. "Mrs. Laverick," said the young gentleman, "I've been searching this two hours, and I won't go home till I've found the little beggar. Don't be too much frightened." Mr. Charles was the kindest creature in the world, but he was a little lazy; Phæbe did not trust him much, and she searched on alone.

For the third time she descended the cliff. It was dark now; she could hardly feel her steps, and the boom of the waves drowned her voice. In her heart was always the dull, aching misery about Matt. Where was he? O God! where was he? He had deserted her; would he now grow really bad? "Happen I done it myself," groaned Phæbe. "Happen I drove Matt Laverick to her."

She looked in at the window of her old home. Could he be there? It was all bare, silent, and dark, as it had

been during Matt's imprisonment. She looked in at the beer-house, her head bent and her heart fluttering. Never in the old days had she fetched Matt from the beer-house, having a serene confidence that he would come home when he was ready, and that unless he intended it himself (as he sometimes did) no one could make him drunk. But to-night—if she found him in the beer-house to-night, just out of prison, drinking would be no good sign in Matt Laverick. But he was not there; nor had Tim been found in the cold and the rain, and brought in to warm himself at the fire. She turned away.

The stormy tide was going down, and Phœbe groped her way as far as was possible towards her old haunts. "Tim, Tim, where are thee? My bairn, my bairn, where are thee?" she moaned, despairingly.

And then a loud girlish laugh from behind startled her. She turned, shuddering to find herself not alone on the deserted shore. It was some minutes before she perceived Liz Laverick close under the cliff and almost hidden in the dark shadow; Liz Laverick, keeping merry Christmas, and chaffing with a fisherman of course. Phœbe's head reeled. Was it Matt? Was it her lad, Matt Laverick, whom she had driven from her? It wanted but this to end her day of woe; to see Matt and his cousin together, oblivious of Tim and of her.

Phœbe was too much crushed and weakened to spring forward and confront the pair, perhaps tearing out Liz's bonny blue eyes and golden curls, as on another day instinct might have prompted her to do. To-night she was only conscious that the great sea was at her feet, and that for many a broken heart peace and comfort were waiting in its waves. No place was left in the world for her. She was hated by her kin; her child was lost, and Matt Laverick wanted, her no more.

Liz caught sight of the wanderer, for behind the man's compliments and

her own merriment she had heard the despairing cry. With bare sure feet she ran across the seaweed to learn what was the matter. "Why, heart alive! it's Phœbe!" cried the girl.

For a moment the rival beauties stared at each other in silence, and all the dumb anguish of a stricken animal shone in Phœbe's eyes.

"There's naught happed to your man, Phœbe, is thar?" asked Liz rather doubtfully.

"I don't know naught about him!" groaned Phœbe. "Oh, Liz, Liz, haven't *you* seen him?" Her proud heart swelled as she asked the question, but not pride itself was so strong now as the desire to learn something about Matt.

"No, I ha'n't seen him," said Liz; "but I made sure he warn't far off. He'll never go far off while you're about, Phœbe. There, woman, don't, don't cry. Don't go breaking yourself like this. Matt Laverick's a good lad. He'll come back, if only to look after mother and me, let alone you, Phœbe. Go home to your Tim, and I'll step up and tell you when I see him."

Liz Laverick's despised, merry countenance was all overflowing with sympathy and kindness. She had hold of Phœbe's arm and was trying to drag her shorewards away from the waves. Phœbe heard very little of what she said. She had been quite unnerved by the revulsion of feeling when she learned that Liz knew no more of Matt than she did herself. "Liz," she sobbed at last, her head sinking on the girl's shoulder, "I've lost my Tim. I can't find him anywhere."

"Heart alive!" cried Liz. After a minute she jumped up and clapped her hands. "Well! well!" she said, "don't be seeking him in the sea, Phœbe. Come ashore and I'll help you. I'm a great girl for finding bairns. Have you looked in the cavern round point? He's a handy climber, Tim is. Never fear no more, woman! We'll find him."

"Come! come!" said Phœbe clinging to Liz. But she was bewildered and half unconscious. After a moment she stopped as if rooted to the ground, and the girl could not draw her away.

"Phœbe," said Liz, "you're dead beat. Sit you down. I'll bring him sharp to you, if he's in the cave. If he isn't, I'll turn out the lads. There's a many to seek, you know. No boats out to night. And there's none wouldn't do a turn for Matt Laverick's bairn, let alone for your bright eyes, Phœbe—and happen for mine too!"

Phœbe's senses were returning with hope, and the girl's last phrase quickened them. "You may seek yourself, Liz Laverick," she said, stiffly, "but I don't want no rousing of the lads along of my eyes nor of yourn neither." Then her head drooped again and with a great sob she added, "If I can't find him, Liz, I'll just die in the sea, for I've nothing else to live for."

Liz thought she was going to cry too; but just then a splash of oars reached her quick ears, and she moved aside a little to listen. At a short distance from the scar, tossing like a cork and like to be swamped by every wave, a small boat appeared on the moonlit track before the two women.

"Hey!" shouted Liz, springing upon a fallen boulder, where she caught the light on her cotton frock, her round face, and thick curls, pulled down and tossed about by the rough hands of Charlie Sims the fisherman. "Hey!" she cried, waving her arms beckoningly, a picturesque, startling figure in the bright moonlight.

Phœbe, bent, ghastly, shuddering, stood below her in the shade, her hands pressed against her heart, her breast heaving with quick sobs. At Liz Laverick's loud call, she started and looked up, terrified and confused. "Is it Tim?" she whispered apprehensively. Then repeated with sudden vehemence, "Liz! Liz! answer me! Is it Tim?"

V

THEY stood together alone upon the beach, Matt Laverick and his wife; and Phœbe had forgotten her child. The surf roared and thundered at their feet, dashing the cold spray in their faces. Words were possible only between the fall of the waves, and for long no words were spoken. Phœbe clasped her hands on his arm, and Matt held her because she seemed tottering and weak; and he looked at her and wondered. Liz, unnoticed by Matt, forgotten by Phœbe, and much astonished by the silence and the desperate air of the couple, had hurried away to seek the missing child. Husband and wife were alone; and there was that in Matt Laverick's air which frightened Phœbe. "You didn't come, lad, last night, when you left the prison," said she, falteringly.

"Lass, you didn't welcome me afore, and I'd best keep away from you now," said Matt. "What are thee doing here, Phœbe, and no by the fire with Tim, forgetting thy lad as were prisoned?"

"Oh, Matt, Matt!" cried Phœbe, remembering. "Tim's run away! He's lost. I can't find him anywhere!"

"You've lost my Tim?" said Matt fiercely, dropping her arm and stepping back from her. "Lost my Tim? Were you merry-making, Phœbe, and forgot him?"

"Oh, won't you help *find* him, Matt?" implored the woman. "I must walk on and on, but I can't *see* for crying, and happen if you'll come too, we'll find him together."

"You wouldn't let Tim kiss his da many a day when I called to him; happen Tim has forgotten his da by now," said Matt.

"Oh, lad, don't scold me now! I can't find him. Won't you help me to find my little Tim?" groaned Phœbe, taking his arm and pulling him on.

"Lass," said Matt presently, "when I left the prison I come straight home, thinking happen you'd be come back

too, or take some notice of me. You didn't. But I,—I minded last Christmas when we were together; and so I went out in yon old bit boat I built for thee; and kept my Christmas with her,—most all I had left of thee. And thee warn't thinking of me," cried Matt, with indignant emphasis, "and thee hast lost my Tim. I thought thee'd have cared for Matt Laverick's Tim, anyhow, Phœbe. It seems I hadn't oughter trusted thee."

He walked on with long, quick strides, leaving Phœbe to struggle after him as best she could. "Come on, lass, come on," said Matt, pausing and looking back at her; "don't waste time crying. Them eyes was never meant for crying. I'll find thy Tim; but I'm thinking I'll keep him myself this time. You can go back to your inland folk and be merry with them."

"Oh, Matt! don't speak to me so," moaned Phœbe; "don't be so angry with me."

He waited for her; then took her roughly by the elbow and led her on. A long way it seemed to her, over rock and sand and pebble, loose shale wearying to the foot, slippery seaweeds with streamlets bubbling among them, huge boulder-stones as hard in the uncertain light to evade as to surmount. They wandered vaguely, finding no trace of the child.

"Matt, was they kind to thee in the jail?" whispered Phœbe at last.

"Maybe."

"Had you bread enoff, and a sup of drink whiles?"

"Maybe. I can't tell. It's long since *thee* cared about my bread and my drink, Phœbe."

"Don't say it, Matt, that I didn't care," said Phœbe.

They were ascending now, for the tide had not yet uncovered the rocks at the point, and the breakers were beating against the great buttress below their steps. The path, a mere track used by the jet-seekers, was steep and difficult, zigzagging up half-way to the plateau above, and there

skirting the face of the cliff almost perpendicular to the waves. It was a dangerous place. At one spot the rock was cloven by a far-reaching narrow fissure, and as each wave burst against the cliff it sent a foaming eddy up this long chasm in which the water continually seethed and boiled. Following the path you had to jump nearly three feet from ledge to ledge of jutting rocks which did their best to form a natural bridge; but the ravine widened below and on calm days could be entered by a boat. Phœbe and Matt in the old time had made their way in sometimes, and had laughed at the hollow echo of their voices as they lingered in the shade, their boat rocking gently on the green wavelets, while they gazed at the stainless sky and saw the shining gulls wing their way over the narrow gorge, heedless of the happy human creatures below.

To-night Phœbe sank abruptly on the path, before they reached this dangerous chasm. The moon just now was hidden and there was little use in seeking anything, while the gloom aggravated the dangers of the path. Phœbe sat on a jutting rock and Matt stretched himself on the ground beside her while they waited for returning light.

"Matt," said Phœbe in a low voice, "I never meant for them to prison thee, lad; it was none of my doing."

"Ay, lass, but it was. Phœbe," said Matt, rising on his elbow and looking at her, "have you forgot the times when we were together first? When thou come fishing with me, and we walked together on the scar, and sat by the fire Sundays, and minded our courting? and thee had left thy inland place, and thy fine gowns, and thy speaking way thou had larned at school, to come and bide down here with me? And thee were the prettiest lass in all the Bay, Phœbe, and I loved thee. And I'd have loved thee the same when thee war old and ugly, and couldn't sing, nor run, nor go sea-faring no more. And I thought thou

loved me like that, and that we'd have been together to the end and have lain together within sound of the waves, and have felt the sun shining on us, thee and me, and Tim to come after us. But I doubt I were wrong, lass, and thee have never rightly loved the sea, nor the sun, nor thy fisher-lad; or thou wouldn't have left me like this."

"It was not I that forgot the old times, Matt. It was not I that done it."

"You left me, Phæbe, and all for why? Acause I was a bit free with yon yellow-curled lass of my own kin, as I'd known since I were born, and laughed with times, and who wouldn't give me the tackle without a kiss for luck, that were no harm from her own kin; but never coorted, nor went companying with, nor thought of aside thee, Phæbe."

"It weren't not the first time, Matt," said Phæbe, her voice shaking. "I borne a deal from that lass. I had bade you take heed, Matt, and you wouldn't hearken to me!"

"Never coorted, nor went companying with," repeated Matt, "nor thought of aside Phæbe. I loved thee, lass. The yellow-curled lass were good for an hour, and a joke, and happen a kiss; but thee war my heart's treasure, Phæbe!"

"Thou didn't say so then, Matt. Thou said wicked things of that girl and of me."

"Acause thou had angered me, Phæbe. I would have told thee afterwards but thou wouldn't speak with me. And then they clapped me in prison which never come to none of my kin afore. It would never have been if thou had stood by me; but folk are aye ready to speak agen a lad what has quarrelled with his lass; and they thought, as *you* had no call to think, Phæbe, that I war after Liz that day for my own sake, and not saving her from that saucy rascal, Bob Smurthwaite, who deserved all he got, though I didn't give it him with that intent. Sir Vincent, he up and

said I war a trothless scoundrel, who had driven his own lass off, and she the prettiest in the Bay, to go after the other wenches and get fighting for them. It warn't for *me*, Phæbe, to say it war *thy* fault, and thou had left me of thy own doing; and all for nothing but a black, jealous temper and a few words atween us that oughter been healed right off by a kiss. And thee war the treasure of my heart, Phæbe."

"Matt! Matt! I didn't think much of the fighting. Thou wast given to fighting, Matt. I didn't think they'd prison thee for fighting. And now, lad—and now—I doubt thou don't love me any more!" said Phæbe.

"Lass, I don't believe thou knows what a man like me means by love or thou wouldn't be aye doubting me. But it can't be the same now. You wouldn't speak with me afore, and now I been in prison, I don't blame thee so much now, lass. Happen I wouldn't make it up with a jail-man myself, if I were a woman."

"No, lad," said Phæbe, trembling and drawing closer to him, "I would never have left thee acause of that, never. Matt, wilt thou come right away from here—to Yarmouth, maybe, where folk don't know us? I'd come with thee there, and I'd work my arms out of their pits for thee there."

"No, lass," said Matt, roughly, "I won't leave this place. I won't have it said Matt Laverick was druv away from his home for Liz, nor for no woman in the world. If thou won't come down to me in the old cottage where Tim were born, I'll just do without thee." He spoke angrily, and rising, turned his back on her. The moon had brightened and he moved on without another word to seek the child. But something caught his eye, and stopping short he turned again suddenly to face his wife; "Tim didn't wear shoon, did he, Phæbe?" said the man.

Phæbe gave a little cry of ecstasy, starting to her feet. "Matt, Matt! we have found him! It is his shoe!

He can't be far now. Oh lad, lad, leave me and run for him! Run!"

But Matt remembered the chasm with the boiling flood below, and he frowned as he quickened his steps. "You had no call to be putting shoon on my Tim, Phœbe," said the fisherman shortly; and stopped on the edge of the gorge, lying down and listening to the advancing and retreating of the flushed waters.

His fear communicated itself to Phœbe. "Lad, what are thee doing?" she said. "Come on and look for our Tim. He can't be far away now." Then a deadly faintness came over her and she reeled and closed her eyes. "Matt! Matt!" she cried wildly, "thou don't think he's fallen in?"

The man rose and looked at her; then led her back a few steps and seated her. "Lass, I can't tell. It looks like the t'other shoe down there on the rock; happen it ben't, but I've got to go and see."

Without pausing for a reply, he began cautiously to clamber down the rocky side of the fissure, towards the foaming flood below. After a few minutes Phœbe collected herself, and staggered again to the edge of the gorge, her eyes wild with terror.

"Phœbe," called Matt from below, "go back to where I put you, or you'll anger me."

"Matt! Matt!" she screamed, "thou'll be drowned. If he's fallen in—if little Tim has fallen in, we can't help it! Matt, we cannot help it! Come back, Matt! Oh, lad, come back!"

"Lass," shouted Matt angrily, pausing in his descent, "if thou don't obey me and go back to where I put thee, I won't save thy Tim."

He waited, frowning, till she had obeyed, hanging in mid-air. Phœbe crouched on the edge of the path, clutching her hair with both hands, and swaying backwards and forwards like one in a frenzy. And the east wind whistled and screamed round the point, against which the waves beat ceaselessly; and in the abyss the flood boiled and swirled

and gurgled as it rose and fell; and water met water hurled in vain fury from side to side of the gorge. Phœbe thought the whole heaven was bowing and darkening and thundering at her; in her brain was a roar of many billows louder than ever was the voice of earthly sea. It seemed hours before Matt came back to her; yet the bright moon was still shining and the Christmas bells were still ringing in the village steeple above the cliff, their voice clear and distant, swelling in the pauses of the storm. Slowly Matt mounted and rejoined her. Phœbe stared at him with meaningless eyes, and he kept silence bending over her.

"Matt! Matt! thou doan't think he's drowned?" she shrieked suddenly, throwing up her arms.

Then the man knelt beside her, his arms round her waist, kissing her cold, clenched hands and icy brow. "Phœbe, my lass! my lass! I don't see how a little chap could have fallen down there on a night like this without being drowned! And I have found this, lass, and nought else."

She took the little drenched hat mechanically, and leaned her head on Matt's shoulder without a word.

"Poor lass! Poor lass!" murmured the fisherman. "Happen he never fell in at all! Happen I'll find him for thee yet. Come home with me, Phœbe, come home. Thee can't go back to yon inland place without thy Tim. Come home; and I'll go seek him for thee agen. Happen he never fell in at all, Phœbe, my lass! my lass!"

But it was long before Phœbe moved or spoke. She lay motionless in his arms, like one dazed and crushed. At last she raised her head and said brokenly: "Matt, thou art thinking one thing thou needn't. I didn't know they'd let thee out yester-eve; and I went this morning to the prison to meet thee and bring thee home. Tim couldn't have walked all them miles; he war a little 'un. And I put him with mother and she lost him. And now we'll never see him no more, Matt, thee nor me."

But he *couldn't* have walked so far, lad; and I went to meet thee."

"Phœbe, my lass, my lass!" said Matt, bowing his head on hers and crushing her to his heart.

VI.

He raised her, and half leading, half carrying, he brought her slowly down the steep path, across the slippery rocks, along the beach where the cobbles were drawn up for Sunday. They moved silently through the hamlet to the battered cottage where had been their home.

A knot of men were standing round the beer-house, and among them Liz Laverick, looking flushed and excited as she told of Tim's disappearance. "He's but a bairn," she was saying, "and you all thought deals of Matt Laverick and his lass. You wouldn't have the bairn starved with cold, the day his da comes home? I'll never speak a word to one of you men agen if you won't come seek Matt Laverick's little Tim."

And then they all turned, and watched, half curiously, half fearfully, as Matt Laverick himself passed by, with his lass faint and staggering, clinging to him and weeping. "Don't let them speak to me, Matt," she murmured. "I couldn't bear to tell any one that thy Tim is drowned."

He pushed them away roughly; even Liz Laverick, who had at once sprung forward to help her kinsman in supporting the exhausted and heart-broken Phœbe. Matt unlocked the cottage door, and brought her into the room with its cracked wall and mud floor, which all smelt damp and brine-washed. He put her in the one arm-chair, beside which was Tim's long disused wooden cradle. She dropped her face on her hands and neither stirred nor spoke as Matt groped about till he had found some damp firewood, and with shaking fingers, the tears running down his own brown face, had made a faint and flickering blaze.

Then he went out, and Phœbe

dreamily heard him summon Liz and send her to the beer-house for such food as was at this hour procurable. The fire and the candle flickered and sputtered; the mice came out of their holes unfrightened by the noiseless woman who had returned to them; the moon shone through the casement, making strange slanting bars of light across the floor, and bathing in its cold rays Phœbe's bent figure, her drooping head, and frigid hands convulsively clutching her dress. She was faint and heart-broken and bereaved; conscious of little more than of one thing, that Matt was with her and would care for her. Neither power nor energy was left to the poor thing; she could only wait motionless till his return. How long he delayed she knew not; when at last he entered a long low groan burst from her lips, and she stretched out her arms to him without looking up. Matt had brought no food; he did not heed his fire which had gone out. Meeting Liz outside with a loaf and a jug in her hands, he had pushed her aside, saying, "Wait a bit, wench," and had slammed the door on her. He entered and stood over Phœbe kissing her hair, and holding her hands in his. "Lass," he said, with tears in his voice, "is it only acause thee's in sorrow thee has come home to me, or would thee have come any way? Would thee stay now if thee were happy agen?"

"I can't think of happiness, Matt," mourned Phœbe, "when my Tim is drowned. But I must stay with thee to-night, lad; I can't do without thee. Thou'lt have to forgive me everything and let me stay."

"Then thee wouldn't stay if thee warn't sad, Phœbe? I'm afeard of thee, lass. But rise up and come out with me now, for I have something to show thee."

"I can't go no further to-night, Matt," she answered, faintly, sinking back in her chair, and looking at him with sad imploring eyes.

Matt replied with some excitement: "But I will have thee come, Phœbe

Don't thee sit thar disputing, lass, but rise up and come out with me as I bid thee." Matt was peremptory and Phœbe had to obey. He put his right arm round her, and holding her left hand in his stooped over her as they walked. Liz saw them in great astonishment; then, as they took no notice of her, she went into the cottage, blew up the fire, set on the kettle, and prepared the frugal meal.

Matt Laverick led Phœbe round to the back of the cottage where was a great pile of fishing-nets, and where in the old days she had been used to sit working and singing, watching for the russet sail of *The Homeward Bound*, and playing with Tim, who rolled and kicked at her feet. And here now, in a nest among the nets lay the good dog Bo'sun, very thin and aged after six months' living on his wits, but awake and bright-eyed, and ready to wag his tail as his master laid a hand on his head, though too full of responsibility to stir. Bo'sun had a treasure there among the nets, and was lying close to it to keep it warm and safe from the peeling wind, letting his hot quick breath blow upon it, and now and then bending his shaggy head to

lick the thing he had found, and brought home in safety to the place where his master was sure to come. And here Phœbe found it, the good dog's treasure—Matt Laverick's little Tim.

His clothes were torn and soaked; on his sturdy arm were the marks of the big dog's teeth; but his eyes were fast shut in sound childish slumber, his breath came soft and regular, his round cheek was gently flushed, his little feet were curled up and rosy as on his mother's lap, and from top to toe he was warm as his mother's heart.

"Lass," said Matt, pressing her to him, "don't thee say thou'll love me only if we're sorrowing together. For our bairn is found and safe, and I want the twain of you."

Then Phœbe flung her arms round his neck and sobbed on his breast loud and long for joy. "Matt, Matt!" she murmured, "I have gotten thee back. I have gotten thee both back! I never thought when I rose up this morning, lad, I was to have such a happy Christmasing."

KATHARINE WYLDE.

THE CONSOLATIONS OF POETRY.

IN the new volume of essays which Mr. Birrell has lately collected and (following the infelicitous precedent of his earlier volume) republished under the title of *Res Judicatæ*, he breaks a lance with *The Spectator* in defence of Matthew Arnold's poetry. A writer in that paper appears to have said in his haste that Arnold's poetry had never consoled anybody. "A falser statement," Mr. Birrell retorts, "was never made innocently. It may never have consoled the writer in *The Spectator*, but because the stomach of the dram-drinker rejects cold water is no kind of reason for a sober man abandoning his morning tumbler of the pure element." And then he clenches this not very apposite illustration with the assertion that Arnold's poetry has been found "full of consolation."

The answer to such a challenge must, one would suppose, have been anticipated by Mr. Birrell. So good a Johnsonian cannot have forgotten a rebuke administered to Boswell by the Sage in the form of an apologue of a barren orchard and a "poring" man. And in other ways Mr. Birrell's right hand would seem to have somewhat forgotten its cunning when he ran this joust, for the quality of the literature provided by the successor of Addison and Steele is not generally regarded as alcoholic; nor would his verdict that the general characteristic of Arnold's poetry is to be "quick and to the point" perhaps be universally accepted. Yet it is not easy to see how the two critics come to be at variance. Some part at least of the consolation that Mr. Birrell draws from Arnold's poetry will surely appear to the plain man precisely such as he would expect to find consoling the devout and simple souls which breathe so gently through

the pages of *The Spectator*. Mr. Birrell selects two sonnets as especially consoling: the one known as *East London*, wherein the poet meets an ill, overworked preacher in the hot and squalid streets of Bethnal Green, and learns from him the secret of his cheerfulness; the other known as *The Better Part*, in which they who believe the Founder of the Christian religion to have been no more than man are exhorted at least to try if they "can be such men as he." "There are," says Mr. Birrell, "finer sonnets in the English language than these, but there are no better sermons." Finer sonnets assuredly there are, for Arnold's poetical genius did not as a rule work best in the sonnet; but as sermons they are doubtless admirable. It is a theory with some people that sermons and sonnets do not go well together, and that the poet is rarely in his happiest vein when usurping the office of the preacher. Mr. Birrell gives a reason for his dissent from this theory, which cannot well be courteously gainsaid. The odd part of it is that *The Spectator*, who is apparently quite as fond as Mr. Birrell of looking for sermons in his poetry, should refuse to be consoled by what he finds in Arnold's. It is easy to understand why he should reject some of it; but surely the sermon preached from Bethnal Green was sufficiently orthodox for him.

The discussion serves to show how dangerous it is to dogmatise on the consolations of poetry. Here are two critics, both, so far as can be guessed, holding the same theories of poetry, eager to look for the same qualities in it, rejoicing to find them; and yet both utterly at variance over the same poet. The truth is (if the æsthetic epicure will pardon such plain speaking),

that the intellectual and the physical part of us have many things in common; one man's meat is another man's poison. Tiberius, we are told, held that man a fool who at the age of thirty years needed another to tell him what was best to eat, drink, and avoid; if he had not discovered the secret of his own stomach by that time, he was past help; whether he chose to abide by his knowledge was of course another matter. It seems dangerous to hint that our fathers could have been as wise as their sons on any point. Yet we take leave to doubt whether all the prescriptions so freely offered by physicians, professional and otherwise, for preserving health, will profit us more than the homely good sense of our sires. They did not believe in a written law for regulating these things. "There is," says Bacon, "a wisdom in this beyond the rules of physic; a man's own observation, what he finds good of, and what he finds hurt of, is the best physic to preserve health." And we find Burton concluding that: "Our own experience is the best physician; that diet which is most propitious to one, is often pernicious to another. Such is the variety of palates, humours, and temperatures; let every man observe and be a law unto himself."

Is it not much the same with the sustenance—call it consolation or stimulus—to be derived from poetry? It is as idle to be angry with a man who does not find the same enjoyment in the same poetry as you do, as it is to be angry with him, if you happen to be a great eater of beef, for preferring a lighter diet. There are, no doubt, certain broad principles of right and wrong in poetry as in peptics, principles which no man can flout and be saved. There are some poets (not so very many) whom if a man reject, clearly there is nothing to be done with him but to follow Dogberry's precedent with that perverse fellow who would not stand. We may be pretty sure that there must be something wrong with the man who, like King Valoroso of

Paphlagonia, drinks brandy with his breakfast,—that at any rate there very soon will be something wrong with him. But when we pass beyond these first principles, as we may call them, we enter upon the curious wilderness of taste, or fancy if that name be preferred. Perhaps it is the better name, when one recalls the rejoinder made by a noted cynic to a lady who, pleading the cause of a certain popular writer, observed that he had so much taste: "Madam, he has, and all of it bad." Let us then call it fancy; and who is to dogmatise about fancy?

It is not clear that Mr. Birrell and *The Spectator* even mean the same thing by "consolation." *The Spectator* says that Mr. Birrell really means "stimulus." One can conceive Mr. Birrell replying that he knew very well what he meant, and that he meant consolation. But the difference between the two qualities is rather apparent than real. In all consolation there must be some stimulant, something which braces us to bear the ills we suffer from, something of that "invigorating tonic quality" which *The Spectator* admits may sometimes be found in Arnold's poetry; and which Mr. Birrell, somewhat oddly, seems to find in the following lines from the same poet, lines which he also finds, "In reality, in wholesome thought, in the pleasures that are afforded by thinking, of incomparable excellence."

Joy comes and goes, hope ebbs and flows
Like the wave;
Change doth unknit the tranquil strength
of men.
Love lends life a little grace,
A few sad smiles; and then,
Both are laid in one cold place,
In the grave.

Dreams dawn and fly, friends smile and
die
Like spring flowers;
Our vaunted life is one long funeral.
Men dig graves with bitter tears
For their dead hopes; and all,
Mazed with doubts and sick with fears,
Count the hours.

We count the hours ! these dreams of ours,
False and hollow,
Do we go hence and find they are not
dead ?

Joys we dimly apprehend,
Faces that smiled and fled,
Hopes born here, and born to end,
Shall we follow ?

Pretty verses enough, no doubt ; but,—consoling ? “ Certain, ’tis certain ; very sure, very sure : death, as the Psalmist saith, is certain to all ; all shall die. How a good yoke of bullocks at Stamford Fair ? ” Yet, if Mr. Birrell can find consolation in this mood of sadness, who shall gainsay him ? He is likely at least to have it all to himself. When Macaulay heard of the death of Hallam’s younger son, he wrote in his diary : “ Poor Hallam, what will he do ? He is more stoical than I am, to be sure. I walked reading Epictetus in the streets. Anointing for broken bones ! Let him try how Hallam will be consoled by being told that the lives of children are οὐκ ἐφ’ ἡμῶν [matters beyond our control]. ” Arnold indeed has assured us that in certain evil times he found comfort in the study of Epictetus ; but he has also confessed that he found more comfort in the study of Homer and Sophocles. Macaulay, it will of course be said, was a Philistine. As we have never felt quite sure what that terrible epithet implies,—some people evidently using it, as Cardinal Newman used *liberal*, to signify anything and everybody displeasing to them—we are not concerned to defend Macaulay from the charge. But if, as we sometimes suspect, it includes the possession of wholesome, manly common sense, then assuredly Macaulay was a very fine Philistine indeed.

The amount and quality of the consolation which poetry is capable of providing must obviously depend on the individual temperament of the sufferer. It must depend also, in some degree, on the nature of his sickness. The physicians of Harley and Brook Streets do not prescribe one uniform

remedy to every form of bodily disease ; nor do they treat all patients suffering from the same disease in the same manner. Every one fond of poetry selects his poet according to his mood. In Shakespeare alone, the universal, may all moods of man find their counterpart.

All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs
which bow,
Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

Nor is it only in pain, and grief, and weakness that Shakespeare consoles ; he consoles by virtue of his natural magic little less, if less at all, than by virtue of his moral truths. *The Spectator*, after quoting one of Arnold’s poems, admits that they “ sound consolatory,” but maintains that, “ if read carefully with a view to practice rather than to mere æsthetic pleasure,” the amount of consolation they offer is no great thing. But if considered carefully will not the consolation that poetry offers be found, if not mainly (as we think) at least in no small part, a matter of æsthetic pleasure ? Is it not the beauty of the form in which it is offered that gives the consolation its soothing or its tonic power ? The poet translates into words, that shall burn for ever as a lamp to lighten our darkness, the thoughts with which our stammering tongues and fumbling fingers can only play, as children play with a box of letters out of which they can form no certain syllables. It is his mission to interpret what commoner minds have felt, perhaps unconsciously till they saw and knew their wandering thoughts thus stamped in the universal currency of the world. “ After life’s fitful fever he sleeps well,”—was Shakespeare the first man to whom the contemplation of death suggested this consoling thought ? Yet with these few words he has moulded it into a form more durable than any wrought of brass or marble. We may

be reading *The Spectator* wrong, but his argument seems to suggest that the sort of consolation he looks for in poetry will most easily and most often be found in Dr. Watts. If the æsthetic pleasure is to count for nothing, then surely,

And while the lamp holds out to burn
The vilest sinner may return,

must carry more comfort to the soul "weary with itself and sick of asking," than the message Matthew Arnold heard from the stars and the waters, "Wouldst thou be as these are? Live as they." For one who has felt the consolation of the mood itself, thousands must have been refreshed and soothed by the tender beauty of the lines in which Wordsworth expresses his debt to Nature for,

That blessed mood
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world
Is lightened.

In truth we cannot think that the very material form of consolation which *The Spectator* expects to find in poetry is to be found there. The poet cannot console as the leech consoles when he relieves the sufferer from pain, brings sleep to the sleepless, or turns mourning into joy by any practice of his heaven-sent skill. Such consolation a man can minister only to himself.

No man can save his brother's soul,
Or pay his brother's debt.

But from good poetry there comes that pure æsthetic pleasure which, when derived from beautiful or noble subjects, does undoubtedly exercise on minds capable of appreciating it, and in tune for it, an elevating and refining pleasure; and all that tends to elevate and refine man, tends in its degree to refresh and strengthen, and so to console him. Nor need the poetry which is found to exercise this influence be necessarily concerned with the conduct of life, with what we vaguely call religion. Mr. Birrell very truly observes that Arnold's love of Nature

and his poetic treatment of her has brought relief and joy to many a vexed soul. And he adds with equal truth that this was due in no small degree to the fact that, greatly as he admired Wordsworth and was influenced by him, the order of his mind led him to reject, with the heartiest good-will, the cloudy pantheism which mar so much of Wordsworth's verse. Empedocles, musing in his last hour on the summit of Etna, looks back regretfully to the days of his youth when he could still delight in the beauty of outward things with the pure natural joy of a simple mind which had not lost its balance nor grown the slave of thought; when the sports of the country-people could give pleasure, sunset and seed-time and harvest, the reapers in the corn, the vine-dresser in his vineyard, the village girl at her wheel. This natural joy at least Arnold never lost, and it is in the expression of this joy that his verse, so some at least of his admirers hold, takes its happiest and most natural touch. It is in this love of natural beauty, and in his power of expressing it, that the poet, we suspect, most often touches the heart. The scenes he pictures, flash, in Wordsworth's phrase, upon the inward eye in lonely rooms and amid the din of towns and cities. As we read, the bare walls fall back; there comes a vision of trees, and a river flowing through the vale of Cheapside. The winds murmur through the pines, the waves whisper on the shore; through the wide fields of breezy grass we wander again beneath the soft canopy of English air; again from the dark dingles our enchanted ears drink in the song of the nightingales. No painter can play the magician for us like the poet. The inward eye sees clearer and further than the outward vision. The philosophical critic may scoff at this as a merely sensual form of consolation, and take his stand on the great moral truths inculcated by the great poets. Nor will we be concerned to refute him. Only we would submit that the pleasures we have

described as coming from poetry are more generally felt and more closely loved than those deeper thoughts which not every mind is capable of grasping, and which, when grasped, do not bring the solace we mean to every mind.

Man must endure
His going hence, e'en as his coming
hither :
Ripeness is all.

For one whom that great moral truth
has comforted, how many thousands, we
wonder, have been cheered into forget-
fulness by the natural magic of

Daffodils
That come before the swallow dares, and
take
The winds of March with beauty. Violets,
dim
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
Or Cytherea's breath.

Nor is it true that such solace is merely
sensual. Not the scene only returns
to us, but all the memories of the
scene. We feel like the poet himself,
when the cry of the cuckoo brought
back to him his vanished youth ;
like him, we can "beget that golden
time again." In Mr. William Morris's
last volume, *Poems by the Way*, there
is an excessively touching passage from
the poem called "The Half of Life
Gone." The poet watches the country-
folk at work in the hay-fields, lying
on the grass, as he used to lie, in the
glad time before he "meddled with
right and with wrong."

The dear sun floods the land as the morn-
ing falls towards noon,
And a little wind is awake in the best of
the latter June.
They are busy winning the hay, and the
life and the picture they make,
If I were as once I was, I should deem it
made for my sake.

The scene, and the actors in it, he
knows them all, and has known them
from boyhood.

But little changed are they
Since I was a lad amongst them ; and yet
how great is the change !
Strange are they grown unto me ; yea I to
myself am strange.

Their talk and their laughter, mingling
with the music of the weeds,
Has now no meaning to me, to help or to
hinder my needs,
So far from them have I drifted. And yet
amidst of them goes
A part of myself, my boy, and of pleasure
and pain he knows,
And deems it something strange when he is
other than glad.

The consolations of poetry are not
always of a joyful cast. In the memory
of the unreturning days there must
ever be some touch of melancholy, even
though it bring not the consciousness
of chances wasted and powers mis-
applied. At its best the pleasure it
gives will mostly be the subdued and
chastened pleasure with which we
watch the daylight dying in the dusk
of evening. There is one glory of the
sunset, and another of the dawn ; both
are exquisite, yet so different.

It is surely then difficult to separate
the spiritual from the sensual pleasure
of poetry. Some poets reign solely
by virtue of the latter quality—
Shelley and Keats, for example, and
some of the Elizabethan lyrists. Of
much of Shelley's poetry it is im-
possible to analyse the charm ; it
soothes us like a strain of music or
the scent of a flower. To consider it
too curiously is to handle a butterfly,—
the bloom is gone. The poet of clouds
and sunsets he has been called ; he is
rather the poet of the breeze and the
blossom. The charm of Keats is,
indeed, more material, but yet for the
most part sensual too. To what he
might have come no man can guess ;
but of what he did the chief glory is
what a poet of our own day has finely
called "the glory of words." It
seems impossible for any arrangement
of English words, or of any words,
one might say, to yield more exquisite
music than the *Ode to a Nightingale*.
To read it is indeed to take a draught
from "a beaker full of the warm
south ;" and as we drink it we seem
in very sooth to "leave the world un-
seen," and with the poet, "fade away
into the forest dim". Matthew
Arnold, it is true, rates Keats'

"naturalistic interpretation" much higher. Of the *Ode to Autumn* he says that it actually "renders Nature," as compared with the *Lines written in the Euganean Hills*, where Shelley can only "try to render her." We should doubt whether Shelley concerned himself much to render Nature literally; except when, like Mr. Morris, he set himself to "meddle with right and with wrong," he sang, it has always seemed to us, as the blackbird and the lark, who

Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

Certainly we never get from his poetry the idea, the image of Nature as we get it from Shakespeare or Wordsworth, from Scott or Byron or Lord Tennyson. But do we really get it much more clearly from Keats?

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where
are they?

Think not of them,—thou hast thy music
too,
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying
day

And touch the stubble-plains with rosy
hue;

Then in a wailful choir the small gnats
mourn

Among the river-sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from
hilly bourn;

Hedge-crickets sing, and now with treble
soft

The redbreast whistles from a garden croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the
skies.

It is not for the moment a question of the *poetical quality*; on that side it would be hard indeed to better this stanza; it is a question of the literal rendering of Nature, by which it is to be presumed that Arnold meant to signify the poet's power of bringing the scene before you by means of words with something of the same exactness with which the painter reproduces it by means of colours. In that respect Keats' elaborate picture seems to us less successful than the simpler strokes in which Collins paints the scene where

from his mountain hut the solitary
views the approach of evening,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd
spires;
And hears their simple bell; and marks
o'er all

Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

Or than Scott's yet plainer method of
marking the rising storm:

The blackening wave is edged with
white;

To inch and rock the sea-mews fly.

Or than Wordsworth when watching
London from Westminster Bridge:

This city now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning: silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and tem-
ples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky,
All bright and glittering in the smokeless
air.

Or than Lord Tennyson, who makes
you feel all the freshness of night in
two lines:

When from the dry dark wold the summer
airs blow cool

On the oat-grass and the sword-grass, and
the bulrush in the pool;

and all the sweet, restful charm of
English landscape in,

A league of grass, wash'd by a slow broad
stream,
That, stirr'd with languid pulses of the
oar,

Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on,
Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge
Crown'd with the minster-towers. The
fields between

Are dewy fresh, browsed by deep-udder'd
kine,

And all about the large lime feathers low,
The lime a summer home of murmurous
wings.

And what accumulation of details,
however lovingly chosen and delicately
wrought, can match the stern sim-
plicity with which Milton brings the
very toll of the curfew-bell on our
ears:

Over some wide watered shore
Swinging slow with sullen roar.

The charm of poetry, as Lord Tennyson has so happily said, is often found in a single golden phrase, or even in one lonely word. This secret the ancients knew well. Homer showed the value of it in his famous night-scene, where the peaks and headlands stand clear in the *windless* air, and all the stars come out in the *immeasurable* heavens, and the shepherd's heart grows glad. Could pages of description bring back the storied past as it comes in that one incomparable line of Virgil :

Fluminaque antiquos subterlabentia
muros?

Shakespeare knew it when he wrote of the "dim violet" and the "nimble air." Milton knew it when he wrote of "Chaos and old Night." Keats knew it when he wrote of the "perilous seas in faery-lands forlorn." Leigh Hunt's place is only among the skirmishers of the noble army of poets, yet for one moment he stepped into the front rank when he wrote of

The glory extreme
Of high Sesostris, and that Southern beam,
The laughing queen that caught the world's
great hands.

We have left ourselves little time or space to touch on that note which, in Sir Philip Sidney's fine phrase, moves the heart as, with a trumpet; yet among the pleasures of poetry it is not to be forgotten or despised. Not of the highest or purest kind, it is yet a very genuine and wholesome one, nor, as the superior person would teach us, fit only for the delectation of boys. The old ballads are rich of course in this rousing strain, and Scott, who had steeped his noble soul in them, wove his love for it into one brave stanza.

Sound, sound the clarion, shrill the fife !
To all the sensual world proclaim,
One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name.

His veins must run cold indeed who,
even though his hair be grey, feels

not his blood stir as he reads in Michael Drayton's jubilant verse how the battle fared on St. Crispin's day, when the English arrows "stung like to serpents"; how, as evening deepened over Flodden,

The stubborn spearmen still made good,
Their dark impenetrable wood

round their wounded king; how the trumpets pealed under the Sorcian height as the great Twin Brethren couched their lances for the last charge, while

Behind them Rome's long battle
Came rolling on the foe,
Ensigns dancing wild above,
Blades all in line below ;

or how on that memorable summer day in Plymouth market-place three hundred years ago the stout old sheriff raised the standard of defiance to the Spaniard ;

Look how the Lion of the sea lifts up his
ancient crown,
And underneath his deadly paw treads the
gay lilies down.
So stalked he when he turned to flight, on
that famed Picard field,
Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and
Cæsar's eagle shield.
So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath
he turned to bay,
And crushed and torn beneath his claws
the princely hunters lay.

Many indeed and various are the consolations which poetry affords, such as a volume would barely do justice to, much less one short paper in a magazine. But they are not to be dictated or prescribed. No man can be hectored into a love of poetry; nor will the lover bear that the particular object of his love shall be forced upon him at the pen's point.

If she be not so to me,
What care I how fair she be ?

One of the most charming of George Wither's poems is called *The Consolations of Poetry*. No fitter title man ever found for his work, for the poem was written in the Marshalsea prison

where his satirical vein had lodged him for a brief space soon after he had come to push his fortune in London. The Muse, he assures us, could comfort him in the midst of sorrow and in the blackest place. But it was his own Muse who taught him this precious secret ; and this material form of comfort will not come to every man, though too many seem to think they have found it. Yet, after all, if writing bad verses console a man, we should not grudge him so easy a mode of consolation. In this matter, too, let each man, as Bacon says, be a law unto himself ; let him only take heed not to impose himself as a law unto others. In these few pages,—pages whose sole

merit lies in the many wise and beautiful words they have borrowed from others—we have not wished to be a law unto any man: not to *The Spectator*, if we have not misunderstood him and he does find consolation in Dr. Watts ; assuredly not to Mr. Birrell, who is more capable than most men of framing laws for his own guidance and who, like the old wolf of Rome, will hear no master and bear no goad. We have merely tried to indicate some of the different forms of consolation which poetry can provide, and to point out that if the word be interpreted too literally, the sphere of its influence runs perhaps some danger of being unduly limited.

THE STRANGER IN THE HOUSE.

EXAMINE the new House of Commons in detail—meet it in detachments and instalments in the corridors, lobbies, and precincts of St. Stephen's—and one could scarcely help being driven to the conclusion that there is again a great falling off to be noted in the general character of the body. For example, on the first day of its meeting, I was in the Members' lobby, under proper convoy, when a personage whom I took to be one of "Buffalo Bill's" company passed by me towards the doors of the House itself, was duly stopped by one of the janitors posted there, gave his name or some other explanation, and was allowed to enter. Soon afterwards a man came up whom I should have taken to be a lamp-cleaner on some railway line, or a mechanic who had accidentally found his way here from the regions below, where machinery is always kept going in order to ensure a supply of fresh and cool air for the nation's representatives. He too walked boldly up to the magic portals, and after a brief parley was admitted. Some of the roughest-looking Irishmen I have seen for a good many years past made good their claims in the same manner. As regards the conventional marks of respectability, the new House, thus surveyed, would seem to be immeasurably below any of its predecessors. Yet that impression was not confirmed when I had time and opportunity to scrutinize with a careful eye the entire assembly from my old post behind the clock. I "looked it over" closely, and it seemed to me that it was, upon the whole, much such another House of Commons, in outward appearance, as the last, with three or four eccentrics thrown in by way of variety. Otherwise there are almost as many black coats and high

hats as ever, though probably the average is only maintained by every Conservative being dressed in the regulation manner. In regard to dress, if not always in politics, the Tory party is to be found tenaciously adhering to the old lines. It keeps up the traditions of Parliament (for which Mr. Gladstone is so great a stickler) in favour of Members wearing what is ordinarily called becoming attire. It would be easy, however, to attach a great deal too much importance to this matter, especially in days when it is by no means safe to judge any man or woman by the mere article of dress. If working men are to be elected to the House of Commons,—and evidently they will be, in larger numbers, after each dissolution of Parliament—why should they not be dressed as working men? Much has been said and written about Mr. Keir Hardie and his yellow trousers, his flannel shirt without a collar, and his hideous travelling-cap. If this is his ordinary costume, it ought not to be criticised. But I have inspected it closely, and it looks to me uncommonly like a rather clumsy theatrical "get up." It is said that Mr. Keir Hardie delights in effects of this description, and that he once made his appearance in a kilt. Let us hope he will return to that. As for his walking up the floor of the House without taking his cap off, that may have been a mere inadvertence. New Members are always getting up and forgetting to take off their hats. If Mr. Keir Hardie kept on his mystical head-gear in sheer defiance of the rules of the House, he deserves the sharp things that have been said about him. No doubt his case is made one of grave suspicion by the manner in which he chose to make his first visit to his new sphere of duties,—in a bank-

holiday van, with his portrait hung outside, and a friend or two blowing hard at brass instruments to let the Speaker and all concerned know that he was coming. It is very hard indeed to justify that performance. However poor a man may be, he is not obliged to make a ludicrous exhibition of himself, or to do anything in violation of the usages of any assembly to which he may happen to belong.

The House itself however has an invincible way of toning down the extravagances of persons who deliberately fling themselves against its forms, ceremonies, and customs. Many a man has gone there with the intention of setting at naught all that other people are accustomed to respect, but he finds himself in contact with a quiet, steady, constant pressure which nothing can resist. Is he a "Labour Member?" Very well, but he is not the only one. He is not a pioneer. Mr. Burt has been there before him, and Mr. Fenwick, and Mr. Howells, and Mr. Abraham, and others who might be mentioned, and they do not think it necessary to dress as if they were off for a day's "spree" at Margate. The new-comer finds before long that the people who sit near or round about him are quite as good as he, from whatever point of view regarded, and he also discovers that they see no humiliation in conducting themselves in a quiet and orderly manner. A rowdy, unless he is an Irishman, is made to feel, not perhaps ashamed of himself, but out of his element, isolated, avoided, treated on all sides with quiet contempt. Against such a force as that he cannot fight. He either avoids the place as much as he can, or he becomes a comparatively decent member of the body to which he belongs. The Irishman who is determined to make himself offensive is in a different position. He is at once backed up by seventy or eighty of his fellow countrymen who are in Parliament only to embarrass and degrade it—as one of them boasted, to "break the machine." Among the new Irish

members who have been elected in the place of the all but extinguished Parnellites I see some who, unless I am much mistaken, are destined to give a good deal of trouble. Poor Mr. Chaplin had a taste of their quality on the last night of the remarkable debate on the Address. Some of the noises which interrupted him were scarcely human. But none of the new men, after all, could rival the egregious insolence of Dr. Tanner, who walked slowly down the floor of the House in full view of the whole assembly with a glass of water in his hand, moved some of Mr. Chaplin's papers aside, and deposited the glass on the brass-bound box in front of the speaker. The screams and yells of delight with which the raw recruits sent here by Dr. Walsh and his friends welcomed this successful insult to a Minister who was struggling to fulfil a very disagreeable duty might have been heard on Westminster Bridge. These are the incidents which mark out the tremendous changes which have passed over the House of Commons since, let us say, the days of Lord Palmerston.

I hope that none of us, in the House or out of it, is under any delusion as to the true nature of the events which are going on. Why marvel so much at "changes"? Why make a fuss because a man chooses to sit in the House of Commons with a cap on his head? We are living in the midst of a revolution, although a good many worthy persons do not yet appear to have any suspicion of the fact; and before it has worked itself out, this ancient Parliament, and possibly some other ancient institutions with it, will be shaken from top to bottom. Some of my parliamentary friends tell me that during the last election they came into contact with a spirit which they never met with before in England—a dark, resentful, sinister spirit, the outcome sometimes of mere ignorance skilfully played upon by demagogues, sometimes of a fierce desire to uproot and cast into the fire all those "relics of the past"

which Englishmen are supposed to reverence. People say there always have been prophets of evil after every important change in the Constitution of the country. Very likely, and perhaps the prophecies are fulfilling themselves more slowly than the prophets anticipated. But all is not over yet. The curtain is not down on the third act.

But my business is with the new Parliament, which was just beginning to "feel its feet" when Mr. Gladstone sent it home for six months, greatly to the disgust of the two hundred and sixteen Members who are here for the first time. They did not want to go home; they wished to remain at Westminster. For some days they overran the entire building, examining every nook and corner with the deepest interest, unwilling to part with their new toy even when it was time to go home to bed. They all came to prayers with the utmost regularity, perhaps from a devotional spirit, perhaps on account of the privilege it afforded them of securing a seat for the night. The worthy chaplain was astounded at the size of his congregation. Day after day, even when there was nothing to be done but "swearing in," every seat was taken, for I need not remind you that the House will not accommodate anything like the full number of Members. Put six hundred and seventy men into that chamber, and a very large proportion of them must stand, and stand pretty nearly on one another, for there is no possible way of finding comfortable room for them. In the early days of a Parliament there is always a great outcry about this, and usually a demand goes up for a new House altogether. But, after a time, there is found to be ample space for all. As the excitement of novelty passes off, the "green hand" little by little loses his eagerness to listen to speeches, and the dull routine and drudgery, of which the business of the House mainly consists, begin to tell upon him. His absences become more

methodical and more prolonged. In the course of a year or two he rather resents being called upon by his Whips to put in an appearance a little more frequently. And the Gladstonians will be subjected to very severe discipline in that respect next session, for they have not a man to spare. The Irishmen cannot and will not attend regularly in full force, and Mr. Gladstone has but forty men to play with. He will be liable to continual sorties and surprises. Dexterous hands will be ever ready to make him conscious of his true position, and to bring home to his mind the fact that he is no longer the master of "many legions," scarcely master of one, and assuredly that one is not the Irish legion, which holds all others at its mercy. Balfour, Chamberlain, Churchill, to say nothing of clever sharpshooters on the back benches, will keep up a constant fire on the enemy, as they have a perfect right to do, provided always that it is regulated by the strict rules of Parliamentary warfare. For, from their point of view, an experiment which may prove utterly disastrous to the country is about to be put into operation, and they are bound by every consideration of honour and patriotism to frustrate it. I would therefore advise the new Member who is chafing at his long holiday to possess his soul in patience. He will next year have all the work he wants. He will find out that when there is only a difference of forty between the two parties, even his dinner-hour is more insecure than ever he found it in his life before, and that one of the most useful persons to have on the list of his acquaintance is a steady-going serviceable "pair."

At present, the new Member has brought with him the manners and customs of the ordinary public meetings of which he must have had very recent experience. He applauds by clapping his hands, and he indicates his disapproval by loud shouts and contradictions. When Mr. Gladstone comes upon the scene, he stands up,

waves his hat, and cries "hoo-ray" at the top of his voice. It is easy to distinguish the old Gladstonians from the new by the very different degrees of enthusiasm which they display. The former have "cooled off," as the Americans say. They have got over the fever of hero-worship. Sometimes they may even be heard to pass some very candid criticisms on their former idol. He has not advanced with the times, and although he still keeps his mind open to conviction at critical moments—as, for instance, in regard to the eight-hours question—yet in the main his sentiments are old-fashioned and his tastes aristocratic. There ought not to be any noble lords or other persons of high degree in a Radical government in the year 1892. If the people are in power, put them in office likewise. These are the murmurs which make themselves heard even in the "inner circles" of Mr. Gladstone's followers. But the veteran leader can be obstinate enough when he chooses. He may yield on some points, but when it comes to any interference with his prerogatives as head of his party, he will wage a most gallant and desperate fight against all comers. He will not turn his back upon old friends who have been true to him. Many a time he has menaced the House of Lords, but nothing will deter him from going to it for a colleague when he thinks proper, and we all know that he has made his full share of additions to that august body. He will be the real head of the Ministry, at least as regards the selection of his subordinates. Some of the new school of Radicals, who leave not only Mr. Gladstone but Mr. John Morley far in the rear, attempted to bring a certain degree of pressure to bear upon their chief while he was forming his Ministry last month. They might as well have attempted to move St. Paul's by leaning against it. Before actually reaching office Mr. Gladstone will leave everything open to the expectations of his friends. They may look forward to anything which happens to

strike their fancy. But when once he is Prime Minister and master of the situation, it is a very different story. The old Duke of Wellington himself was not a greater martinet. For some of the under-secretaryships he may allow a sort of scramble to go on. But with the choice of the Cabinet itself he will brook no interference, and any one who is honoured by the offer of a post in it must take that post or go empty away. Mr. Gladstone is only clay when the victory is still to be won. After he is installed in Downing Street he becomes marble.

When the results of the General Election were declared, everybody knew what must happen, and therefore the formal debate on a vote of want of confidence was from some points of view a ceremony which might have been dispensed with. But there were some very striking incidents connected with it, not the least striking being the speech of Mr. John Redmond, of which I think we shall hear a good deal more as time goes on. For in that he formulated the demands which no section of the Irish party will dare to repudiate, though the more numerous section may desire to keep them in the background for the moment. In these papers I believe I have already expressed the opinion that Mr. John Redmond is one of the finest speakers in the House of Commons or anywhere else. There are not many men to whom I should be disposed to rank him as second. Now on this particular occasion he made a deep impression on all who heard him, and if Mr. Gladstone chose the next night to make light of what he said, and to dismiss it with the simple remark that he "had not the advantage of hearing the speech," that is his own affair; but it does not deprive Mr. Redmond's demands of their deadly import. An Irish Parliament responsible only to Irish Ministers of its own creation, not subordinate in any way to the Imperial Parliament; the release of dynamiters and other

desperadoes known to the Irish as "political prisoners"; the restoration of evicted tenants to their former holdings, the present tenants being summarily turned out—these were some of the hard and relentless conditions hurled at Mr. Gladstone, on the very eve of his stepping into office, by his "Parnellite" supporters. No wonder that he found it convenient to ignore them. Yet they gave all the life to the debate that there was in it. Nothing else that occurred was of half so much moment. That speech foreshadowed the entire future course of the Irish struggle.

Mr. Gladstone was no doubt right in choosing one of the "new men" to lead the attack on Lord Salisbury's Administration. Mr. Asquith is a very good type of the class. He is clever and fluent; he possesses boundless self-confidence; he has been very lucky, and he has pushed his luck home. Every sentence that he utters is carefully prepared. There is little gold leaf, but it is beaten out very thin, and made to cover a most prodigious surface. I have heard all the speeches Mr. Asquith has delivered in the House. They have not been numerous, and they have been very much alike. His stock-in-trade is "epigram." Upon that he stakes everything. While he is speaking, you see that he is deliberately sacrificing everything for effect. He has a thin, acrid, palsy kind of delivery, reminding one of the teacher of "deportment" in Dickens who insisted upon his pupils bringing their lips well together by continually saying "prunes and prism." He described the Liberal Unionists as men who supported the Government with "a perverted fidelity which was rare in the annals of political apostasy." This by a "rising young lawyer," one of your modern "smart" men, of public servants like John Bright and the Duke of Devonshire, to mention no others! Well did Sir Henry James deal with this brilliant specimen of the Asquithian epigram when he asked, on the clos-

ing night of the debate, in what ought to have been the closing speech, "What does an apostate mean?" And then he turned to the Gladstonian chiefs near him, and with a wave of the arm towards them he said, "Is it a man who changes his faith for gain, for office, and for power? Who are the men who have done that?" The House gave to the retort a personal application at once, and cheered vehemently. "Does the mover of this amendment," continued Sir Henry James, in one of the most effective thrusts I have ever heard him deliver, "charge us with having acted from any other ground than that of conscientious conviction? If he does, let him say so, and make the charge publicly." Mr. Asquith shifted uneasily in his seat, but was silent. He had delivered his epigram. What more could any one want? He had made good his claim to a seat in the Cabinet and £5,000 a year. How could he have taken his wares to a better market?

Mr. Joseph Chamberlain was cold, keen, and incisive as usual, going straight to the heart of the business in hand, and sending his poisoned arrows in and among the Gladstonians undisturbed by the savage interruptions to which he was occasionally exposed. It was not very likely that he would overlook the significance of Mr. John Redmond's speech, or allow the rest of the Home Rulers to huddle it out of sight. He showed in his usual trenchant manner that the Gladstonians who had managed to get themselves elected in England on the Home Rule issue had done so under false pretences, for they had all declared, with Sir William Harcourt, that the Irish Parliament must be "subject, always subject" to the Imperial Parliament and to the English veto. But Mr. Redmond had flung away all disguises of that kind, and no one—not even Mr. Timothy Healy—had dared to correct or modify his statements in the slightest degree. At one point of Mr. Chamberlain's

exposure of all this treachery, Mr. Healy exhibited a strong desire to separate his party from Mr. Redmond's on this question of the veto, but Mr. Chamberlain turned sharply round to him, challenged him to contradict Mr. Redmond plainly, and Mr. Healy was forthwith extinguished. All these were most valuable side-lights on the general situation, profoundly interesting to all who study the forces which are at work beneath the surface of politics. Before Parliament meets again, they will be forced upon the attention of even the most careless. No doubt, for the moment, Mr. Gladstone is satisfied that he will be able to control them. But does Mr. John Morley, does Sir William Harcourt, share that confidence? It did not look like it on the 11th of August, for they sat in gloomy silence, and not one word did they venture to utter in reply either to Mr. Redmond or to Mr. Chamberlain. Their silence was as full of meaning as any speech that was delivered during the debate. I very much doubt whether they are under any illusions as to the glorious alliance into which they have entered, or as to the fate of the Ministry which they have joined.

As Mr. Gladstone owes his return to power to his Irish allies, it was only natural that the Irishmen should get up what is called a "demonstration" after the division which sent him back to Downing Street. I have seen several of these performances, but none of them seemed to me so artificial and so forced as that of the 11th of August. On the night when the famous Home Rule Bill was thrown out, no one really knew what the result was to be, for at the last moment it was thought that some of the dissentients might be "got at" by Mr. Gladstone, who has many springes wherewithal to catch woodcocks, and the crisis might

be tided over. There was an element of uncertainty in the event, and therefore there was some ground for excitement. But there was no uncertainty as to the fate of Lord Salisbury's Ministry. Still, it would not do to let it be buried without holding a sort of wake over it. The Irishmen were all in readiness. I think I never saw so many priests in the galleries and the lobbies as on this particular night. They were everywhere, rubicund, smiling, delighted with the success of their schemes so far as they had yet gone. The *supplice* of Mr. Chaplin being over, there was nothing more to stand between them and their triumph. For the third time only in six years, the clerk did not hand over the fatal figures to the Government Tellers. The first occasion upon which the Government was beaten was concerning the "Cass case," the second was also on the motion of a Private Member, relating to abuses in the Admiralty Office. But these defeats were of no political moment. The third and last was decisive. Then the Irishmen went in for sport. When once the Speaker had read out the numbers, not another intelligible sound could be heard. The House was packed; everybody had come in from the division lobbies,—everybody but one. For that one the Home Rulers were waiting impatiently. Presently the right moment arrived. Mr. Gladstone made a thoroughly good and well-conceived dramatic entry, alone, with the entire length of the House to traverse, walking slowly, and acknowledging with a slight inclination of his head the uproarious cheers and shouts which saluted him. His entire party stood up in a body, and the only thing wanted to complete the scene was a brass band and a little blue and red fire!

MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

OCTOBER, 1892.

DON ORSINO.¹

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ORSINO was not in an enviable frame of mind when he left the hotel. It is easier to bear suffering when one clearly understands all its causes, and distinguishes justly how great a part of it is inevitable, and how great a part may be avoided or mitigated. In the present case there was much in the situation which it passed his power to analyse or comprehend. He still possessed the taste for discovering motives in the actions of others as well as in his own, but many months of a busy life had dulled the edge of the artificial logic in which he had formerly delighted, while greatly sharpening his practical wit. Artificial analysis supplies from the imagination the details lacking in facts, but common sense needs something more tangible upon which to work. Orsino felt that the chief circumstance which had determined Maria Consuelo's conduct had escaped him, and he sought in vain to detect it.

He rejected the supposition that she was acting upon a caprice, that she had yesterday believed it possible to marry him, while a change of humour made marriage seem out of the question to-day. She was as capricious as most women, perhaps, but not enough so for that. Besides, she had been really consistent. Not even yesterday had she been shaken for a moment in her

resolution not to be Orsino's wife. To-day had confirmed yesterday, therefore. However Orsino might have still doubted her intention when he had gone to her side for the last time, her behaviour then and her final words had been unmistakable. She meant to leave Rome at once.

Yet the reasons she had given him for her conduct were not sufficient in his eyes. The difference of age was so small that it could safely be disregarded. Her promise to the dying Aranjuez was an engagement, he thought, by which no person of sense should expect her to abide. As for the question of her birth, he relied on that speech of Spicca's which he so well remembered. Spicca might have spoken the words thoughtlessly, it was true, and believing that Orsino would never, in any circumstances whatever, think seriously of marrying Maria Consuelo. But Spicca was not a man who often spoke carelessly, and what he said generally meant at least as much as it appeared to mean.

It was doubtless true that Maria Consuelo was ignorant of her mother's name. Nevertheless, it was quite possible that her mother had been Spicca's wife. Spicca's life was said to be full of strange events not generally known. But though his daughter might, and doubtless did, believe herself a nameless child, and, as such, no match for the heir of the

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Saracinesca, Orsino could not see why she should have insisted upon a parting so sudden, so painful, and so premature. She knew as much yesterday and had known it all along. Why, if she possessed such strength of character, had she allowed matters to go so far when she could easily have interrupted the course of events at an earlier period? He did not admit that she perhaps loved him so much as to have been carried away by her passion until she found herself on the point of doing him an injury by marrying him, and that her love was strong enough to induce her to sacrifice herself at the critical moment. Though he loved her much he did not believe her to be heroic in any way. On the contrary, he said to himself that if she were sincere, and if her love were at all like his own, she would let no obstacle stand in the way of it. To him, the test of love must be its utter recklessness. He could not believe that a still better test may be, and is, the constant forethought for the object of love, and the determination to protect that object from all danger in the present and from all suffering in the future, no matter at what cost.

Perhaps it is not easy to believe that recklessness is a manifestation of the second degree of passion, while the highest shows itself in painful sacrifice. Yet the most daring act of chivalry never called for half the bravery shown by many a martyr at the stake, and if courage be a measure of true passion, the passion which will face life-long suffering to save its object from unhappiness or degradation is greater than the passion which, for the sake of possessing its object, drags it into danger and the risk of ruin. It may be that all this is untrue, and that the action of these two imaginary individuals, the one sacrificing himself, the other endangering the loved one, is dependent upon the balance of the animal, intellectual, and moral elements in each. We do not know much about the causes of what we feel, in

spite of modern analysis; but the heart rarely deceives us, when we can see the truth for ourselves, into bestowing the more praise upon the less brave of two deeds. But we do not often see the truth as it is. We know little of the lives of others, but we are apt to think that other people understand our own very well, including our good deeds if we have done any, and we expect full measure of credit for these, and the utmost allowance of charity for our sins. In other words, we desire our neighbour to combine a power of forgiveness almost divine with a capacity for flattery more than parasitic. That is why we are not easily satisfied with our acquaintances, and that is why our friends do not always turn out to be truthful persons. We ask too much for the low price we offer, and if we insist we get the imitation.

Orsino loved Maria Consuelo with all his heart, as much as a young man of little more than one-and-twenty can love the first woman to whom he is seriously attached. There was nothing heroic in the passion, perhaps, nothing which could ultimately lead to great results. But it was a strong love, nevertheless, with much of devotion in it and some latent violence. If he did not marry Maria Consuelo, it was not likely that he would ever love again in exactly the same way. His next love would be either far better or far worse, far nobler or far baser—perhaps a little less human in either case.

He walked slowly away from the hotel, unconscious of the people in the street and not thinking of the direction he took. His brain was in a whirl, and his thoughts seemed to revolve round some central point upon which they could not concentrate themselves even for a second. The only thing of which he was sure was that Maria Consuelo had taken herself from him suddenly and altogether, leaving him with a sense of loneliness which he had not known before. He had gone to her in considerable distress about

his affairs, with the certainty of finding sympathy and perhaps advice. He came away, as some men have returned from a grave accident, apparently unscathed it may be, but temporarily deprived of some one sense, of sight, or hearing, or touch. He was not sure that he was awake, and his troubled reflections came back by the same unvarying round to the point he had reached the first time,—if Maria Consuelo really loved him, she would not let such obstacles as she spoke of hinder her union with him.

For a time Orsino was not conscious of any impulse to act. Gradually, however, his real nature asserted itself, and he remembered how he had told her not long ago that if she went away he would follow her, and how he had said that the world was small and that he would soon find her again. It would undoubtedly be a simple matter to accompany her, if she left Rome. He could easily ascertain the hour of her intended departure, and that alone would tell him the direction she had chosen. When she found that she had not escaped him she would very probably give up the attempt and come back, her humour would change, and his own eloquence would do the rest.

He stopped in his walk, looked at his watch, and glanced about him. He was at some distance from the hotel and it was growing dusk, for the days were already short. If Maria Consuelo really meant to leave Rome precipitately, she might go by the evening train to Paris, and in that case the people of the hotel would have been informed of her intended departure.

Orsino only admitted the possibility of her actually going away while believing in his heart that she would remain. He slowly retraced his steps, and it was seven o'clock before he asked the hotel porter by what train Madame d'Aranjuez was leaving. The porter did not know whether the lady was going north or south, but he called another man, who went in

search of a third, who disappeared for some time.

"Is it sure that Madame d'Aranjuez goes to-night?" asked Orsino trying to look indifferent.

"Quite sure. Her rooms will be free to-morrow."

Orsino turned away and slowly paced up and down the marble pavement between the tall plants, waiting for the messenger to come back.

"Madame d'Aranjuez leaves at nine forty-five," said the man, suddenly reappearing.

Orsino hesitated a moment, and then made up his mind.

"Ask madame if she will receive me for a moment," he said, producing a card.

The servant went away and again Orsino walked backwards and forwards, pale now and very nervous. She was really going, and was going north—probably to Paris.

"Madame regrets infinitely that she is not able to receive the Signor Prince," said the man in black at Orsino's elbow. "She is making her preparations for the journey."

"Show me where I can write a note," said Orsino, who had expected the answer.

He was shown into the reading-room and writing materials were set before him. He hurriedly wrote a few words to Maria Consuelo without form of address and without signature.

"I will not let you go without me. If you will not see me, I will be in the train, and I will not leave you, wherever you go. I am in earnest."

He looked at the sheet of note-paper and wondered that he should find nothing more to say. But he had said all he meant, and sealing the little note he sent it up to Maria Consuelo with a request for an immediate answer. Just then the dinner-bell of the hotel was rung. The reading-room was deserted. He waited five minutes, then ten, nervously turning over the newspapers and reviews on the long table, but quite unable to read even the printed titles. He rang and asked

if there had been no answer to his note. The man was the same whom he had sent before. He said the note had been received at the door by the maid, who had said that Madame d'Aranjuez would ring when her answer was ready. Orsino dismissed the servant and waited again. It crossed his mind that the maid might have pocketed the note and said nothing about it, for reasons of her own. He had almost determined to go up stairs and boldly enter the sitting-room, when the door opposite to him opened and Maria Consuelo herself appeared.

She was dressed in a dark, close-fitting travelling costume, but she wore no hat. Her face was quite colourless, and looked, if possible, even more unnaturally pale by contrast with her bright auburn hair. She shut the door behind her and stood still, facing Orsino in the glare of the electric lights.

"I did not mean to see you again," she said, slowly. "You have forced me to it."

Orsino made a step forward and tried to take her hand, but she drew back. The slight uncertainty often visible in the direction of her glance had altogether disappeared, and her eyes met Orsino's directly and fearlessly.

"Yes," he answered. "I have forced you to it. I know it, and you cannot reproach me if I have. I will not leave you. I am going with you wherever you go."

He spoke calmly, considering the great emotion he felt, and there was a quiet determination in his words and tone which told how much he was in earnest. Maria Consuelo half believed that she could dominate him by sheer force of will, and she would not give up the idea, even now.

"You will not go with me, you will not even attempt it," she said.

It would have been difficult to guess from her face at that moment that she loved him. Her face was pale and the expression was almost hard. She held her head high as though she were looking down at him, though he

towered above her from his shoulders.

"You do not understand me," he answered quietly. "When I say that I will go with you, I mean that I will go."

"Is this a trial of strength?" she asked after a moment's pause.

"If it is, I am not conscious of it. It costs me no effort to go; it would cost me much to stay behind, too much."

He stood quite still before her, looking steadily into her eyes. There was a short silence, and then she suddenly looked down, moved and turned away, beginning to walk slowly about. The room was large, and he paced the floor beside her, looking down at her bent head.

"Will you stay if I ask you to?" The question came in a lower and softer tone than she had used before.

"I will go with you," answered Orsino as firmly as ever.

"Will you do nothing for my asking?"

"I will do anything but that."

"But that is all I ask."

"You are asking the impossible."

"There are many reasons why you should not come with me. Have you thought of them all?"

"No."

"You should. You ought to know, without being told by me, that you would be doing me a great injustice and a great injury in following me. You ought to know what the world will say of it. Remember that I am alone."

"I will marry you."

"I have told you that it is impossible—no, do not answer me! I will not go over all that again. I am going away to-night. That is the principal thing, the only thing that concerns you. Of course, if you choose, you can get into the same train and pursue me to the end of the world. I cannot prevent you. I thought I could, but I was mistaken. I am alone. Remember that, Orsino. You know as well as I what will be said, and the fact is sure to be known."

"People will say that I am following you——"

"They will say that we are gone together, for every one will have reason to say it. Do you suppose that nobody is aware of our,—our intimacy during the last month?"

"Why not say our love?"

"Because I hope no one knows of that—well, if they do—Orsino, be kind! Let me go alone; as a man of honour, do not injure me by leaving Rome with me, nor by following me when I am gone!"

She stopped and looked up into his face with an imploring glance. To tell the truth, Orsino had not foreseen that she might appeal to his honour, alleging the danger to her reputation. He bit his lip and avoided her eyes. It was hard to yield, and to yield so quickly, as it seemed to him.

"How long will you stay away?" he asked in a constrained voice.

"I shall not come back at all."

He wondered at the firmness of her tone and manner. Whatever the real ground of her resolution might be, the resolution itself had gained strength since they had parted little more than an hour earlier. The belief suddenly grew upon him again that she did not love him.

"Why are you going at all?" he asked abruptly. "If you loved me at all, you would stay."

She drew a sharp breath and clasped her hands nervously together.

"I should stay if I loved you less. But I have told you; I will not go over it all again. This must end,—this saying good-bye! It is easier to end it at once."

"Easier for you——"

"You do not know what you are saying. You will know some day. If you can bear this, I cannot."

"Then stay,—if you love me, as you say you do."

"As I say I do!" Her eyes grew very grave and sad as she stopped and looked at him again. Then she held out both her hands. "I am going now. Good-bye."

The blood came back to Orsino's face. It seemed to him that he had reached the crisis of his life and his instinct was to struggle hard against his fate. With a quick movement he caught her in his arms, lifting her from her feet and pressing her close to him.

"You shall not go!"

He kissed her passionately again and again, while she fought to be free, straining at his arms with her small white hands and trying to turn her face from him.

"Why do you struggle? It is of no use." He spoke in very soft deep tones, close to her ear.

She shook her head desperately and still did her best to slip from him, though she might as well have tried to break iron clamps with her fingers.

"It is of no use," he repeated, pressing her still more closely to him.

"Let me go!" she cried, making a violent effort, as furious as the last.

"No!"

Then she was quite still, realising that she had no chance with him.

"Is it manly to be brutal because you are strong?" she asked. "You hurt me."

Orsino's arms relaxed, and he let her go. She drew a long breath and moved a step backward and towards the door.

"Good-bye," she said again. But this time she did not hold out her hand, though she looked long and fixedly into his face.

Orsino made a movement as though he would have caught her again. She started and put out her hand behind her towards the latch. But he did not touch her. She softly opened the door, looked at him once more and went out.

When he realised that she was gone he sprang after her, calling her by name. "Consuelo!"

There were a few people walking in the broad passage. They stared at Orsino, but he did not heed them as he passed by. Maria Consuelo was not

there, and he understood in a moment that it would be useless to seek her further. He stood still a moment, entered the reading-room again, got his hat and left the hotel without looking behind him.

All sorts of wild ideas and schemes flashed through his brain, each more absurd and impracticable than the last. He thought of going back and finding Maria Consuelo's maid; he might bribe her to prevent her mistress's departure. He thought of offering the driver of the train an enormous sum to do some injury to his engine before reaching the first station out of Rome. He thought of stopping Maria Consuelo's carriage on her way to the train and taking her by main force to his father's house. If she were compromised in such a way, she would be almost obliged to marry him. He afterwards wondered at the stupidity of his own inventions on that evening, but at the time nothing looked impossible.

He bethought him of Spicca. Perhaps the old man possessed some power over his daughter after all, and could prevent her flight if he chose. There were yet nearly two hours left before the train started. If worst came to worst, Orsino could still get to the station at the last minute and leave Rome with her.

He took a passing cab and drove to Spicca's lodgings. The count was at home, writing a letter by the light of a small lamp. He looked up in surprise as Orsino entered, then rose and offered him a chair.

"What has happened, my friend?" he asked, glancing curiously at the young man's face.

"Everything," answered Orsino. "I love Madame d'Aranjuez, she loves me, she absolutely refuses to marry me, and she is going to Paris at a quarter to ten. I know she is your daughter, and I want you to prevent her from leaving. That is all, I believe."

Spicca's cadaverous face did not change, but the hollow eyes grew

bright and fixed their glance on an imaginary point at an immense distance, and the thin hand that lay on the edge of the table closed slowly upon the projecting wood. For a few moments he said nothing, but when he spoke he seemed quite calm.

"If she has told you that she is my daughter," he said, "I presume that she has told you the rest. Is that true?"

Orsino was impatient for Spicca to take some immediate action, but he understood that the count had a right to ask the question.

"She has told me that she does not know her mother's name, and that you killed her husband."

"Both these statements are perfectly true at all events. Is that all you know?"

"All? Yes—all of importance. But there is no time to be lost. No one but you can prevent her from leaving Rome to-night. You must help me quickly."

Spicca looked gravely at Orsino and shook his head. The light that had shone in his eyes for a moment was gone, and he was again his habitual, melancholy, indifferent self.

"I cannot stop her," he said, almost listlessly.

"But you can, you will, you must!" cried Orsino, laying a hand on the old man's thin arm. "She must not go——"

"Better that she should, after all. Of what use is it for her to stay? She is quite right. You cannot marry her."

"Cannot marry her? Why not? It is not long since you told me very plainly that you wished I would marry her. You have changed your mind very suddenly, it seems to me, and I would like to know why. Do you remember all you said to me?"

"Yes, and I was in earnest, as I am now. But I was wrong in telling you what I thought at the time."

"At the time! How can matters have changed so suddenly?"

"I do not say that matters have

changed. I have. That is the important thing. I remember the occasion of our conversation very well. Madame d'Aranjuez had been rather abrupt with me, and you and I went away together. I forgave her easily enough, for I saw that she was unhappy; then I thought how different her life might be if she were married to you. I also wished to convey to you a warning, and it did not strike me that you would ever seriously contemplate such a marriage."

"I think you are in a certain way responsible for the present situation," answered Orsino. "That is the reason why I come to you for help."

Spicca turned upon the young man rather suddenly. "There you go too far," he said. "Do you mean to tell me that you have asked that lady to marry you because I suggested it?"

"No, but——"

"Then I am not responsible at all. Besides, you might have consulted me again, if you had chosen. I have not been out of town. I sincerely wish that it were possible—yes, that is quite another matter. But it is not. If Madame d'Aranjuez thinks it is not, from her point of view there are a thousand reasons why I should consider it far more completely out of the question. As for preventing her from leaving Rome, I could not do that even were I willing to try."

"Then I will go with her," said Orsino angrily.

Spicca looked at him in silence for a few moments. Orsino rose to his feet and prepared to go.

"You leave me no choice," he said, as though Spicca had protested.

"Because I cannot and will not stop her? Is that any reason why you should compromise her reputation as you propose to do?"

"It is the best of reasons. She will marry me then, out of necessity."

Spicca rose also, with more alacrity than generally characterised his movements. He stood before the empty fireplace, watching the young man narrowly.

"It is not a good reason," he said, presently, in quiet tones. "You are not the man to do that sort of thing. You are too honourable."

"I do not see anything dishonourable in following the woman I love."

"That depends on the way in which you follow her. If you go quietly home to-night and write to your father that you have decided to go to Paris for a few days and will leave to-morrow, if you make your arrangements like a sensible being and go away like a sane man, I have nothing to say in the matter——"

"I presume not——" interrupted Orsino, facing the old man somewhat fiercely.

"Very well. We will not quarrel yet. We will reserve that pleasure for the moment when you cease to understand me. That way of following her would be bad enough, but no one would have any right to stop you."

"No one has any right to stop me, as it is."

"I beg your pardon. The present circumstances are different. In the first instance the world would say that you were in love with Madame d'Aranjuez and were pursuing her to press your suit, of whatever nature that might be. In the second case the world will assert that you and she, not meaning to be married, have adopted the simple plan of going away together. That implies her consent, and you have no right to let any one imply that. I say, it is not honourable to let people think that a lady is risking her reputation for you and perhaps sacrificing it altogether, when she is in reality trying to escape from you. Am I right, or not?"

"You are ingenious, at all events. You talk as though the whole world were to know in half an hour that I have gone to Paris in the same train with Madame d'Aranjuez. That is absurd!"

"Is it? I think not. Half an hour is little, perhaps, but half a day is enough. You are not an insignificant son of an unknown Roman citizen, nor

is Madame d'Aranjuez a person who passes unnoticed. Reporters watch people like you for items of news, and you are perfectly well known by sight. Apart from that, do you think that your servants will not tell your friends' servants of your sudden departure, or that Madame d'Aranjuez's going will not be observed? You ought to know Rome better than that. I ask you again, am I right or wrong?"

"What difference will it make if we are married immediately?"

"She will never marry you. I am convinced of that."

"How can you know? Has she spoken to you about it?"

"I am the last person to whom she would come."

"Her own father——"

"With limitations. Besides, I had the misfortune to deprive her of the chosen companion of her life, and at a critical moment. She has not forgotten that."

"No, she has not," answered Orsino gloomily. The memory of Aranjuez was a sore point. "Why did you kill him?" he asked suddenly.

"Because he was an adventurer, a liar, and a thief; three excellent reasons for killing any man, if one can. Moreover, he struck her once,—with that silver paper cutter which she insists on using—and I saw it from a distance. Then I killed him. Unluckily I was very angry and made a little mistake, so that he lived twelve hours, and she had time to get a priest and marry him. She always pretends that he struck her in play, by accident, as he was showing her something about fencing. I was in the next room and the door was open; it did not look like play. And she still thinks that he was the paragon of all virtues. He was a handsome devil, something like you, but shorter, with a bad eye. I am glad I killed him."

Spicca had looked steadily at Orsino while speaking. When he ceased, he began to walk about the small room with something of his old energy. Orsino roused himself. He had almost

begun to forget his own position in the interest of listening to the count's short story.

"So much for Aranjuez," said Spicca. "Let us hear no more of him. As for this mad plan of yours, you are convinced, I suppose, and you will give it up. Go home, and decide in the morning. For my part, I tell you it is useless. She will not marry you. Therefore leave her alone and do nothing which can injure her."

"I am not convinced," answered Orsino doggedly.

"Then you are not your father's son. No Saracinesca that I ever knew would do what you mean to do,—would wantonly tarnish the good name of a woman; of a woman who loves him too, and whose only fault is that she cannot marry him."

"That she will not."

"That she cannot."

"Do you give me your word that she cannot?"

"She is legally free to marry whom she pleases, with or without my consent."

"That is all I want to know. The rest is nothing to me——"

"The rest is a great deal. I beg you to consider all I have said, and I am sure that you will,—quite sure. There are very good reasons for not telling you or any one else all the details I know in this story, so good that I would rather go to the length of a quarrel with you than give them all. I am an old man, Orsino, and what is left of life does not mean much to me. I will sacrifice it to prevent your opening this door unless you tell me that you give up the idea of leaving Rome to-night."

As he spoke he placed himself before the closed door and faced the young man. He was old, emaciated, physically broken down, and his hands were empty. Orsino was in his first youth, tall, lean, active, and very strong, and no coward. He was moreover in an ugly humour and inclined to be violent on much smaller provocation than he had received. But Spicca imposed upon

him, nevertheless, for he saw that he was in earnest. Orsino was never afterwards able to recall exactly what passed through his mind at that moment. He was physically able to thrust Spicca aside and to open the door, without so much as hurting him. He did not believe that, even in that case, the old man would have insisted upon the satisfaction of arms, nor would he have been afraid to meet him if a duel had been required. He knew that what withheld him from an act of violence was neither fear nor respect for his adversary's weakness and age. Yet he was quite unable to define the influence which at last broke down his resolution. It was in all probability only the result of the argument Spicca had brought to bear and which Maria Consuelo had herself used in the first instance, and of Spicca's calm undaunted personality.

The crisis did not last long. The two men faced each other for ten seconds and then Orsino turned away with an impatient movement of the shoulders. "Very well," he said. "I will not go with her."

"It is best so," answered Spicca, leaving the door and returning to his seat.

"I suppose that she will let you know where she is, will she not?" asked Orsino.

"Yes. She will write to me."

"Good-night, then."

"Good-night."

Without shaking hands, and almost without a glance at the old man, Orsino left the room.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ORSINO walked slowly homeward, trying to collect his thoughts and to reach some distinct determination with regard to the future. He was oppressed by the sense of failure and disappointment and felt inclined to despise himself for his weakness in yielding so easily. To all intents and purposes he had lost Maria Consuelo, and if he had not lost her through his

own fault, he had at least tamely abandoned what had seemed like a last chance of winning her back. As he thought of all that had happened he tried to fix some point in the past, at which he might have acted differently, and from which another set of consequences might have begun. But that was not easy. Events had followed each other with a certain inevitable logic, which only looked unreasonable because he suspected the existence of facts beyond his certain knowledge. His great mistake had been in going to Spicca; but nothing could have been more natural, in the circumstances, than his appeal to Maria Consuelo's father, nothing more unexpected than the latter's determined refusal to help him. That there was weight in the argument used by both Spicca and Maria Consuelo herself, he could not deny; but he failed to see why the marriage was so utterly impossible as they both declared it to be. There must be much more behind the visible circumstances than he could guess.

He tried to comfort himself with the assurance that he could leave Rome on the following day, and that Spicca would not refuse to give him Maria Consuelo's address in Paris. But the consolation he derived from the idea was small. He found himself wondering at the recklessness shown by the woman he loved in escaping from him. His practical Italian mind could hardly understand how she could have changed all her plans in a moment, abandoning her half furnished apartment without a word of notice even to the workmen, throwing over her intention of spending the winter in Rome as though she had not already spent many thousands in preparing her dwelling, and going away, probably without so much as leaving a representative to wind up her accounts. It may seem strange that a man as much in love as Orsino was should think of such details at such a moment. Perhaps he looked upon them rather as proofs that she meant to come back after all;

in any case he thought of them seriously, and even calculated roughly the sum she would be sacrificing if she stayed away. Beyond all he felt the dismal loneliness which a man can only feel when he is suddenly and effectually parted from the woman he dearly loves, and which is not like any other sensation of which the human heart is capable. More than once, up to the last possible moment, he was tempted to drive to the station and leave with Maria Consuelo after all; but he would not break the promise he had given Spicca, no matter how weak he had been in giving it.

On reaching his home he was informed, to his great surprise, that San Giacinto was waiting to see him. He could not remember that his cousin had ever before honoured him with a visit and he wondered what could have brought him now and induced him to wait, just at the hour when most people were at dinner.

The giant was reading the evening paper, with the help of a particularly strong cigar. "I am glad you have come home," he said, rising and taking the young man's outstretched hand. "I should have waited until you did."

"Has anything happened?" asked Orsino nervously. It struck him that San Giacinto might be the bearer of some bad news about his people, and the grave expression on the strongly-marked face helped the idea.

"A great deal is happening. The crash has begun. You must get out of your business in less than three days, if you can."

Orsino drew a breath of relief at first, and then grew grave in his turn, realising that unless matters were very serious such a man as San Giacinto would not put himself to the inconvenience of coming. San Giacinto was little given to offering advice unasked, still less to interfering in the affairs of others.

"I understand," said Orsino. "You think that everything is going to pieces. I see."

The big man looked at his young

cousin with something like pity. "If I only suspected, or thought—as you put it—that there was to be a collapse of business, I should not have taken the trouble to warn you. The crash has actually begun. If you can save yourself do so at once."

"I think I can," answered the young man bravely. But he did not at all see how his salvation was to be accomplished. "Can you tell me a little more definitely what is the matter? Have there been any more failures to-day?"

"My brother-in-law Montevarchi is on the point of stopping payment," said San Giacinto calmly.

"Montevarchi!" Orsino did not conceal his astonishment.

"Yes. Do not speak of it. And he is in precisely the same position, so far as I can judge of your affairs, as you yourself, though of course he has dealt with sums ten times as great. He will make enormous sacrifices and will pay, I suppose, after all. But he will be quite ruined. He also has worked with Del Ferice's bank."

And the bank refuses to discount any more of his paper?"

"Precisely. Since this afternoon."

"Then it will refuse to discount mine to-morrow."

"Have you acceptances due to-morrow?"

"Yes—not much, but enough to make the trouble. It will be Saturday, too, and we must have money for the workmen."

"Have you not even enough in reserve for that?"

"Perhaps. I cannot tell. Besides if the bank refuses to renew I cannot draw a cheque."

"I am sorry for you. If I had known yesterday how near the end was, I would have warned you."

"Thanks. I am grateful as it is. Can you give me any advice?"

Orsino had a vague idea that his rich cousin would generously propose to help him out of his difficulties. He was not quite sure whether he could bring himself to accept such

assistance, but he more than half expected that it would be offered. In this, however he was completely mistaken. San Giacinto had not the smallest intention of offering anything more substantial than his opinion. Considering that his wife's brother's liabilities amounted to something like five and twenty millions, this was not surprising. The giant bit his cigar and folded his long arms over his enormous chest, leaning back in the easy chair which creaked under his weight.

"You have tried yourself in business by this time, Orsino," he said, "and you know as well as I what there is to be done. You have three modes of action open to you. You can fail. It is a simple affair enough. The bank will take your buildings for what they will be worth a few months hence, on the day of liquidation. There will be a big deficit, which your father will pay for you and deduct from your share of the division at his death. That is one plan, and seems to me the best. It is perfectly honourable, and you lose by it. Secondly, you can go to your father to-morrow and ask him to lend you money to meet your acceptances and to continue the work until the houses are finished and can be sold. They will ultimately go for a quarter of their value, if you can sell them at all within the year, and you will be in your father's debt, exactly as in the other case. You would avoid the publicity of a failure, but it would cost you more, because the houses will not be worth much more when they are finished than they are now."

"And the third plan—what is it?" inquired Orsino.

"The third way is this. You can go to Del Ferice, and if you are a diplomatist you may persuade him that it is in his interest not to let you fail. I do not think you will succeed, but you can try. If he agrees it will be because he counts on your father to pay in the end; but it is questionable whether Del Ferice's bank can afford

to let out any more cash at the present moment. Money is going to be very tight, as they say."

Orsino smoked in silence, pondering over the situation. San Giacinto rose. "You are warned, at all events," he said. "You will find a great change for the worse in the general aspect of things to-morrow."

"I am much obliged for the warning," answered Orsino. "I suppose I can always find you if I need your advice—and you will advise me?"

"You are welcome to my advice, such as it is, my dear boy. But as for me, I am going towards Naples to-night on business, and I may not be back again for a day or two. If you get into serious trouble before I am here again, you should go to your father at once. He knows nothing of business, and has been sensible enough to keep out of it. The consequence is that he is as rich as ever, and he would sacrifice a great deal rather than see your name dragged into the publicity of a failure. Good-night, and good luck to you."

Thereupon the Titan shook Orsino's hand in his mighty grip and went away. As a matter of fact he was going down to look over one of Montevarchi's biggest estates with a view to buying it in the coming cataclysm, but it would not have been like him to communicate the smallest of his intentions to Orsino, or to any one, not excepting his wife and his lawyer.

Orsino was left to his own devices and meditations. A servant came in and inquired whether he wished to dine at home, and he ordered strong coffee by way of a meal. He was at the age when a man expects to find a way out of his difficulties in an artificial excitement of the nerves.

Indeed, he had enough to disturb him, for it seemed as though all possible misfortunes had fallen upon him at once. He had suffered on the same day the greatest shock to his heart, and the greatest blow to his vanity which he could conceive possible. Maria Consuelo was gone and the

failure of his business was apparently inevitable. When he tried to review the three plans which *Sari Giacinto* had suggested, he found himself suddenly thinking of the woman he loved and making schemes for following her; but so soon as he had transported himself in imagination to her side and was beginning to hope that he might win her back, he was torn away and plunged again into the whirlpool of business at home, struggling with unheard of difficulties and sinking deeper at every stroke.

A hundred times he rose from his chair and paced the floor impatiently, and a hundred times he threw himself down again, overcome by the hopelessness of the situation. Occasionally he found a little comfort in the reflection that the night could not last for ever. When the day came he would be driven to act, in one way or another, and he would be obliged to consult his partner *Centini*. Then at last his mind would be able to follow one connected train of thought for a time, and he would get rest of some kind.

Little by little, however, and long before the day dawned, the dominating influence asserted itself above the secondary one, and he was thinking only of *Maria Consuelo*. Throughout all that night she was travelling, as she would perhaps travel throughout all the next day and the second night succeeding that. For she was strong, and having once determined upon the journey would very probably go to the end of it without stopping to rest. He wondered whether she, too, were waking through all those long hours, thinking of what she had left behind, or whether she had closed her eyes and found the peace of sleep for which he longed in vain. He thought of her face, softly lighted by the dim lamp of the railway carriage, and fancied he could actually see it with the delicate shadows, the subdued richness of colour, the settled look of sadness. When the picture grew dim, he recalled it by a strong effort, though he knew that each time it rose

before his eyes he must feel the same sharp thrust of pain, followed by the same dull wave of hopeless misery which had ebbed and flowed again so many times since he had parted from her.

At last he roused himself, looked about him as though he were in a strange place, lighted a candle and betook himself to his own quarters. It was very late, and he was more tired than he knew, for in spite of all his troubles he fell asleep and did not awake till the sun was streaming into the room.

Some one knocked at the door, and a servant announced that *Signor Contini* was waiting to see *Don Orsino*. The man's face expressed a sort of servile surprise when he saw that *Orsino* had not undressed for the night and had been sleeping on the divan. He began to busy himself with the toilet things as though expecting *Orsino* to take some thought for his appearance. But the latter was anxious to see *Contini* at once, and sent for him.

The architect was evidently very much disturbed. He was as pale as though he had just recovered from a long illness and he seemed to have grown suddenly emaciated during the night. He spoke in a low, excited tone, and in substance he told *Orsino* what *San Giacinto* had said on the previous evening. Things looked very black indeed, and *Del Ferice's* bank had refused to discount any more of *Prince Montevarchi's* paper. "And we must have money to-day," *Contini* concluded.

When he had finished speaking his excitement disappeared and he relapsed into the utmost dejection. *Orsino* remained silent for some time and then lit a cigarette.

"You need not be so down-hearted, *Contini*," he said at last. "I shall not have any difficulty in getting money—you know that. What I feel most is the moral failure."

"What is the moral failure to me?" asked *Contini* gloomily. "It is all

very well to talk of getting money. The bank will shut its tills like a steel trap, and to-day is Saturday, and there are the workmen and others to be paid, and several bills due into the bargain. Of course your family can give you millions, in time. But we need cash to-day. That is the trouble."

"I suppose the state telegraph is not destroyed because Prince Montevarchi cannot meet his acceptances," observed Orsino. "And I imagine that our steward here in the house has enough cash for our needs, and will not hesitate to hand it to me if he receives a telegram from my father ordering him to do so. Whether he has enough to take up the bills or not, I do not know; but as to-day is Saturday we have all to-morrow to make arrangements. I could even go out to Saracinesca and be back on Monday morning when the bank opens."

"You seem to take a hopeful view."

"I have not the least hope of saving the business. But the question of ready money does not of itself disturb me."

This was undoubtedly true, but it was also undeniable that Orsino now looked upon the prospect of failure with more equanimity than on the previous evening. On the other hand he felt even more keenly than before all the pain of his sudden separation from Maria Consuelo. When a man is assailed by several misfortunes at once, twenty-four hours are generally enough to sift the small from the great and to show him plainly which is the greatest of all.

"What shall we do this morning?" inquired Contini.

"You ask the question as though you were going to propose a picnic," answered Orsino. "I do not see why this morning need be so different from other mornings."

"We must stop the works instantly——"

"Why? At all events we will change nothing until we find out the

real state of business. The first thing to be done is to go to the bank as usual on Saturdays. We shall then know exactly what to do."

Contini shook his head gloomily and went away to wait in another room while Orsino dressed. An hour later they were at the bank. Contini grew paler than ever. The head clerk would of course inform them that no more bills would be discounted, and that they must meet those already out when they fell due. He would also tell them that the credit balance of their account current would not be at their disposal until their acceptances were met. Orsino would probably at last believe that the situation was serious, though he now looked so supremely and scornfully indifferent to events.

They waited some time. Several men were engaged in earnest conversation, and their faces told plainly enough that they were in trouble. The head clerk was standing with them, and made a sign to Orsino, signifying that they would soon go. Orsino watched him. From time to time he shook his head and made gestures which indicated his utter inability to do anything for them. Contini's courage sank lower and lower.

"I will ask for Del Ferice at once," said Orsino.

He accordingly sought out one of the men who wore the bank's livery and told him to take his card to the count.

"The Signor Commendatore is not coming this morning," answered the man mysteriously.

Orsino went back to the head clerk, interrupting his conversation with the others. He inquired if it were true that Del Ferice were not coming.

"It is not probable," answered the clerk with a grave face. "They say that the Signora Contessa is not likely to live through the day."

"Is Donna Tullia ill?" asked Orsino in considerable astonishment.

"She returned from Naples yesterday morning, and was taken ill in the

afternoon—it is said to be apoplexy," he added in a low voice. "If you will have patience Signor Principe, I will be at your disposal in five minutes."

Orsino was obliged to be satisfied and sat down again by Contini. He told him the news of Del Ferice's wife.

"That will make matters worse," said Contini.

"It will not improve them," answered Orsino indifferently. "Considering the state of affairs I would like to see Del Ferice before speaking with any of the others."

"Those men are all involved with Prince Montevarchi," observed Contini, watching the group, of which the head clerk was the central figure. "You can see by their faces what they think of the business. The short, grey-haired man is the steward, the big man is the architect, the others are contractors. They say it is not less than thirty millions."

Orsino said nothing. He was thinking of Maria Consuelo and wishing that he could get away from Rome that night, while admitting that there was no possibility of such a thing. Meanwhile the head clerk's gestures to his interlocutors expressed more and more helplessness. At last they went out in a body.

"And now I am at your service, Signor Principe," said the grave man of business coming up to Orsino and Contini. "The usual accommodation, I suppose? We will just look over the bills and make out the new ones. It will not take ten minutes. The usual cash, I suppose, Signor Principe? Yes, to-day is Saturday and you have your men to pay. Quite as usual, quite as usual. Will you come into my office?"

Orsino looked at Contini, and Contini looked at Orsino, grasping the back of a chair to steady himself.

"Then there is no difficulty about discounting?" stammered Contini, turning his face, now suddenly flushed, towards the clerk.

"None whatever," answered the latter with an air of real or affected

surprise. "I have received the usual instructions to let Andrea Contini and Company have all the money they need."

He turned and led the way to his private office. Contini walked unsteadily. Orsino showed no astonishment, but his black eyes grew a little brighter than usual as he anticipated his next interview with San Giacinto. He readily attributed his good fortune to the supposed well-known prosperity of the firm, and he rose in his own estimation. He quite forgot that Contini, who had now lost his head, had but yesterday clearly foreseen the future when he had said that Del Ferice would not let the two partners fail until they had fitted the last door and the last window in the last of their houses. The conclusion had struck him as just at the time. Contini was the first to recall it.

"It will turn out as I said," he began, when they were driving to their office in a cab after leaving the bank. "He will let us live until we are worth eating."

"We will arrange matters on a firmer basis before that," answered Orsino confidently. "Poor old Donna Tullia! Who would have thought that she could die! I will stop and ask for news as we pass."

He stopped the cab before the gilded gate of the detached house. Glancing up, he saw that the shutters were closed. The porter came to the bars but did not show any intention of opening. "The Signora Contessa is dead," he said solemnly, in answer to Orsino's inquiry.

"This morning?"

"Two hours ago."

Orsino's face grew grave as he left his card of condolence and turned away. He could hardly have named a person more indifferent to him than poor Donna Tullia, but he could not help feeling an odd regret at the thought that she was gone at last with all her noisy vanity, her restless meddlesomeness, and her perpetual chatter. She had not been old either, though he

called her so, and there had seemed to be still a superabundance of life in her. There had been yet many years of rattling, useless, social life before her. To-morrow she would have taken her last drive through Rome—out through the gate of Saint Lawrence to the Campo Varano, there to wait many seasons perhaps for the pale and half sickly Ugo, of whom every one had said for years that he could not live through another twelve-month with the disease of the heart which threatened him. Of late, people had even begun to joke about Donna Tullia's third husband. Poor Donna Tullia!

Orsino went to his office with Contini and forced himself through the usual round of work. Occasionally he was assailed by a mad desire to leave Rome at once, but he opposed it and would not yield. Though his affairs had gone well beyond his expectation, the present crisis made it impossible to abandon his business, unless he could get rid of it altogether. And this he seriously contemplated. He knew, however, or thought he knew, that Contini would be ruined without him. His own name was the one which gave the paper its value and decided Del Ferice to continue the advances of money. The time was past when Contini would gladly have accepted his partner's share of the undertaking, and would even have tried to raise funds to purchase it. To retire now would be possible only if he could provide for the final liquidation of the whole, and this he could only do by applying to his father or mother, in other words, by acknowledging himself completely beaten in his struggle for independence.

The day ended at last, and was succeeded by the idleness of Sunday. A sort of listless indifference came over Orsino, the reaction, no doubt, after all the excitement through which he had passed. It seemed to him that Maria Consuelo had never loved him, and that it was better after all that she should be gone. He longed for the old days, indeed, but as she now

appeared to him in his meditations he did not wish her back. He had no desire to renew the uncertain struggle for a love which she denied in the end; and this mood showed, no doubt, that his own passion was less violent than he had himself believed. When a man loves with his whole nature, undividedly, he is not apt to submit to separations without making a strong effort to reunite himself, by force, persuasion or stratagem, with the woman who is trying to escape from him. Orsino was conscious of having at first felt the inclination to make such an attempt even more strongly than he had shown it, but he was conscious also that the interval of two days had been enough to reduce the wish to follow Maria Consuelo in such a way that he could hardly understand having ever entertained it.

Unsatisfied passion wears itself out very soon. The higher part of love may and often does survive in such cases, and the passionate impulses may surge up after long quiescence as fierce and dangerous as ever. But it is rarely indeed that two unsatisfied lovers who have parted by the will of the one or of both can meet again without the consciousness that the experimental separation has chilled feelings once familiar and destroyed illusions once more than dear. In olden times, perhaps, men and women loved differently. There was more solitude in those days than now, for what is called society was not invented, and people generally were more inclined to sadness from living much alone. Melancholy is a great strengthener of faithfulness in love. Moreover at that time the modern fight for life had not begun; men as a rule had few interests besides love and war, and women no interests at all beyond love. We moderns should go mad if we were suddenly forced to lead the lives led by knights and ladies in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The monotonous round of such an existence in time of peace would make idiots of us; the horrors of that old warfare would make many of

us maniacs. But it is possible that youths and maidens would love more faithfully and wait longer for each other than they will or can to-day. It is questionable whether Bayard would have understood a single page of a modern love story: Tancred would certainly not have done so; but Caesar would have comprehended our lives and our interests without effort, and Catullus could have described us as we are, for one great civilisation is very like another where the same races are concerned.

In the days which followed Maria Consuelo's departure, Orsino came to a state of indifference which surprised himself. He remembered that when she had gone away in the spring he had scarcely missed her, and that he had not thought his own coldness strange, since he was sure that he had not loved her then. But that he had loved her now, during her last stay in Rome, he was sure, and he would have despised himself if he had not been able to believe that he loved her still. Yet, if he was not glad that she had quitted him, he was at least strangely satisfied at being left alone, and the old fancy for analysis made him try to understand himself. The attempt was fruitless, of course, but it occupied his thoughts.

He met Spicca in the street, and avoided him. He imagined that the old man must despise him for not having resisted and followed Maria Consuelo after all. The hypothesis was absurd and the conclusion vain, but he could not escape the idea, and it annoyed him. He was probably ashamed of not having acted recklessly, as a man should who is dominated by a master passion, and yet he was inwardly glad that he had not been allowed to yield to the first impulse.

The days succeeded each other and a week passed away, bringing Saturday again and the necessity for a visit to the bank. Business had been in a very bad state since it had been known that Montevarchi was ruined. So far, he had not stopped payment, and although

the bank refused discount, he had managed to find money with which to meet his engagements. Probably, as San Giacinto had foretold, he would pay everything and remain a very poor man indeed. But, although many persons knew this, confidence was not restored. Del Ferice declared that he believed Montevarchi solvent, as he believed every one with whom his bank dealt to be solvent to the uttermost centime, but that he could lend no more money to any one on any condition whatsoever, because neither he nor the bank had any to lend. Every one, he said, had behaved honestly, and he proposed to eclipse the honesty of every one by the frank acknowledgement of his own lack of cash. He was distressed, he said, overcome by the sufferings of his friends and clients, ready to sell his house, his jewellery and his very boots, in the Roman phrase, to accommodate every one; but he was conscious that the demand far exceeded any supply which he could furnish, no matter at what personal sacrifice, and as it was therefore impossible to help everybody, it would be unjust to help a few where all were equally deserving.

In the meanwhile he proved the will of his deceased wife, leaving him about four and a half millions of francs unconditionally, and half a million more to be devoted to some public charity at Ugo's discretion, for the repose of Donna Tullia's unquiet spirit. It is needless to say that the sorrowing husband determined to spend the legacy magnificently in the improvement of the town represented by him in parliament. A part of the improvement would consist in a statue of Del Ferice himself, — representing him, perhaps, as he had escaped from Rome, in the garb of a Capuchin friar, but with the addition of an army revolver to show that he had fought for Italian unity, though when or where no man could tell. But it is worth noting that while he protested his total inability to discount any one's bills, Andrea Contini and Company regularly renewed their acceptances when due and signed new

ones for any amount of cash they required. The accommodation was accompanied with a request that it should not be mentioned. Orsino took the money indifferently enough, conscious that he had three fortunes at his back in case of trouble; but Contini grew more nervous as time went on and the sums on paper increased in magnitude, while the chances of disposing of the buildings seemed reduced to nothing in the stagnation which had already set in.

CHAPTER XXV.

AT this time Count Spicca received a letter from Maria Consuelo, written from Nice, and bearing a postmark more recent than the date which headed the page, a fact which proved that the writer had either taken an unusually long time in the composition or had withheld the missive several days before finally despatching it.

MY FATHER—I write to inform you of certain things which have recently taken place and which it is important that you should know, and of which I should have the right to require an explanation if I chose to ask it. Having been the author of my life, you have made yourself also the author of all my unhappiness and of all my trouble. I have never understood the cause of your intense hatred for me, but I have felt its consequences, even at a great distance from you, and you know well enough that I return it with all my heart. Moreover, I have made up my mind that I will not be made to suffer by you any longer. I tell you so quite frankly. This is a declaration of war, and I will act upon it immediately.

You are no doubt aware that Don Orsino Saracinesca has for a long time been among my intimate friends. I will not discuss the question, whether I did well to admit him to my intimacy or not. That, at least, does not concern you. Even admitting your power to exercise the most complete tyranny over me in other ways, I am and have always been free to choose my own acquaintances, and I am able to defend myself better than most women, and as well as any. I will be just, too. I do not mean to reproach you with the consequences of what I do. But I will not

spare you where the results of your action towards me are concerned.

Don Orsino made love to me last spring. I loved him from the first. I can hear your cruel laugh, and see your contemptuous face as I write. But the information is necessary, and I can bear your scorn because this is the last opportunity for such diversion which I shall afford you, and because I mean that you shall pay dearly for it. I loved Don Orsino, and I love him still. You, of course, have never loved. You have hated, however, and perhaps one passion may be the measure of another. It is in my case, I can assure you, for the better I love, the better I learn to hate you.

Last Thursday Don Orsino asked me to be his wife. I had known for some time that he loved me, and I knew that he would speak of it before long. The day was sultry at first and then there was a thunderstorm. My nerves were unstrung and I lost my head. I told him that I loved him. That does not concern you. I told him, also, however, that I had given a solemn promise to my dying husband, and I had still the strength to say that I would not marry again. I meant to gain time, I longed to be alone, I knew that I should yield, but I would not yield blindly. Thank God, I was strong. I am like you in that, though happily not in any other way. You ask me why I should even think of yielding. I answer that I love Don Orsino better than I loved the man you murdered. There is nothing humiliating in that, and I make the confession without reserve. I love him better, and therefore, being human, I would have broken my promise and married him, had marriage been possible. But it is not, as you know. It is one thing to turn to the priest as he stands by a dying man and to say, "Pronounce us man and wife, and give us a blessing, for the sake of this man's rest." The priest knew that we were both free, and took the responsibility upon himself, knowing also that the act could have no consequences in fact, whatever it might prove to be in theory. It is quite another matter to be legally married to Don Orsino Saracinesca, in the face of a strong opposition. But I went home that evening, believing that it could be done and that the opposition would vanish. I believed because I loved. I love still, but what I learned that night has killed my belief in an impossible happiness.

I need not tell you all that passed between me and Lucrezia Ferris. How she knew of what had happened I cannot tell. She must have followed us to the

apartment I was furnishing, and she must have overheard what we said, or seen enough to convince her. She is a spy. I suppose that is the reason why she is imposed upon me, and always has been, since I can remember—since I was born, she says. I found her waiting to dress me as usual, and as usual I did not speak to her. She spoke first. "You will not marry Don Orsino Saracinesca," she said, facing me with her bad eyes. I could have struck her, but I would not. I asked her what she meant. She told me that she knew what I was doing, and asked me whether I was aware that I needed documents in order to be married to a beggar in Rome, and whether I supposed that the Saracinesca would be inclined to overlook the absence of such papers, or could pass a law of their own abolishing the necessity for them, or, finally, whether they would accept such certificates of my origin as she could produce. She showed me a package. She had nothing better to offer me, she said, but such as she had, she heartily placed at my disposal. I took the papers. I was prepared for a shock, but not for the blow I received.

You know what I read. The certificate of my birth as the daughter of Lucrezia Ferris, unmarried, by Count Spicca who acknowledged the child as his: the certificate of your marriage with Lucrezia Ferris, dated strangely enough a fortnight after my birth; and further a document legitimising me as the lawful daughter of you two. All these documents are from Monte Carlo. You will understand why I am in Nice. Yes—they are all genuine, every one of them, as I have had no difficulty in ascertaining. So I am the daughter of Lucrezia Ferris, born out of wedlock and subsequently whitewashed into a sort of legitimacy. And Lucrezia Ferris is lawfully the Countess Spicca. Lucrezia Ferris, the cowardly spy-woman who more than half controls my life, the lying, thieving servant,—she robs me at every turn—the common, half educated Italian creature,—she is my mother, she is that radiant being of whom you sometimes speak with tears in your eyes, she is that angel of whom I remind you, she is that sweet influence that softened and brightened your lonely life for a brief space some three and twenty years ago! She has changed since then.

And this is the mystery of my birth which you have concealed from me, and which it was at any moment in the power of my vile mother to reveal. You cannot deny the fact, I suppose, especially since I have taken the trouble to search the

registers and verify each separate document.

I gave them all back to her, for I shall never need them. The woman,—I mean my mother—was quite right. I shall not marry Don Orsino Saracinesca. You have lied to me throughout my life. You have always told me that my mother was dead, and that I need not be ashamed of my birth, though you wished it kept a secret. So far, I have obeyed you. In that respect, and only in that, I will continue to act according to your wishes. I am not called upon to proclaim to the world and my acquaintance that I am the daughter of my own servant, and that you were kind enough to marry your estimable mistress after my birth in order to confer upon me what you dignify by the name of legitimacy. No. That is not necessary. If it could hurt you to proclaim it I would do so in the most public way I could find. But it is folly to suppose that you could be made to suffer by so simple a process.

Are you aware, my father, that you have ruined all my life from the first? Being so bad, you must be intelligent, and you must realise what you have done, even if you have done it out of pure love of evil. You pretended to be kind to me, until I was old enough to feel all the pain you had in store for me. But even then, after you had taken the trouble to marry my mother, why did you give me another name? Was that necessary? I suppose it was. I did not understand then why my older companions looked askance at me in the convent, nor why the nuns sometimes whispered together and looked at me. They knew perhaps that no such name as mine existed. Since I was your daughter why did I not bear your name when I was a little girl? You were ashamed to let it be known that you were married, seeing what sort of wife you had taken, and you found yourself in a dilemma. If you had acknowledged me as your daughter in Austria, your friends in Rome would soon have found out my existence, and the existence of your wife. You were very cautious in those days, but you seem to have grown careless of late, or you would not have left those papers in the care of the Countess Spicca, my maid—and my mother. I have heard that very bad men soon reach their second childhood and act foolishly. It is quite true.

Then, later, when you saw that I loved, and was loved, and was to be happy, you came between my love and me. You appeared in your own character as a liar, a slanderer and a traitor. I loved a man

who was brave, honourable, faithful ; reckless, perhaps, and wild as such men are, but devoted and true. You came between us. You told me that he was false, cowardly, an adventurer of the worst kind. Because I would not believe you, and would have married him in spite of you, you killed him. Was it cowardly of him to face the first swordsman in Europe ? They told me that he was not afraid of you, the men who saw it, and that he fought you like a lion, as he was. And the provocation, too ! He never struck me. He was showing me what he meant by a term in fencing,—the silver knife he held grazed my cheek because I was startled and moved. But you meant to kill him, and you chose to say that he had struck me. Did you ever hear a harsh word from his lips during those months of waiting ? When you had done your work you fled, like the murderer you were and are. But I escaped from the woman who says she is my mother,—and is—and I went to him and found him living and married him. You used to tell me that he was an adventurer and little better than a beggar. Yet he left me a large fortune. It is as well that he provided for me, since you have succeeded in losing most of your own money at play, doubtless to insure my not profiting by it at your death. Not that you will die—men of your kind outlive their victims, because they kill them.

And now, when you saw,—for you did see it—when you saw and knew that Orsino Saracinesca and I loved each other, you have broken my life a second time. You might so easily have gone to him, or have come to me, at the first, with the truth. You knew that I should never forgive you for what you had done already. A little more could have made matters no worse then. You knew that Don Orsino would have thanked you as a friend for the warning. Instead—I refuse to believe you in your dotage after all—you make that woman spy upon me until the great moment is come, you give her the weapons and you bid her strike when the blow will be most excruciating. You are not a man. You are Satan. I parted twice from the man I love. He would not let me go, and he came back and tried to keep me. I do not know how I escaped. God helped me. He is so brave and noble that if he had held those accursed papers in his hands and known all the truth he would not have given me up. He would have brought a stain on his great name and shame upon his great house for my sake. He is not like you. I parted from him twice ; I know a t I can suffer,

and I hate you for each individual suffering, great and small.

I have dismissed my mother from my service. How that would sound in Rome ! I have given her as much money as she can expect and I have got rid of her. She said that she would not go, that she would write to you, and many other things. I told her that if she attempted to stay I would go to the authorities, prove that she was my mother, provide for her, if the law required it, and have her forcibly turned out of my house by the aid of the same law. I am of age, married, independent, and I cannot be obliged to entertain my mother either in the character of a servant, or as a visitor. I suppose she has a right to a lodging under your roof. I hope she will take advantage of it, as I advised her. She took the money and went away, cursing me. I think that if she had ever, in all my life, shown the smallest affection for me—even at the last, when she declared herself my mother, if she had shown a spark of motherly feeling, of tenderness, of anything human, I could have accepted her and tolerated her, half peasant woman as she is, spy as she has been, and cheat and thief. But she stood before me with the most perfect indifference, watching my surprise with those bad eyes of hers. I wonder why I have borne her presence so long. I suppose it had never struck me that I could get rid of her, in spite of you, if I chose. By the bye, I sent for a notary when I paid her, and I got a legal receipt signed with her legal name, Lucrezia Spicca, nata Ferris. The document formally releases me from all further claims. I hope you will understand that you have no power whatsoever to impose her upon me again, though I confess that I am expecting your next move with interest. I suppose that you have not done with me yet, and have some new means of torment in reserve. Satan is rarely idle long.

And now I have done. If you were not the villain you are, I should expect you to go to the man whose happiness I have endangered, if not destroyed. I should expect you to tell Don Orsino Saracinesca enough of the truth to make him understand my action. But I know you far too well to imagine that you would willingly take from my life one thorn of the many you have planted in it. I will write to Don Orsino myself. I think you need not fear him,—I am sorry that you need not. But I shall not tell him more than is necessary. You will remember, I hope, that such discretion as I may show, is not shown out of consideration for you, but out of forethought

for my own welfare. I have unfortunately no means of preventing you from writing to me, but you may be sure that your letters will never be opened, so that you will do as well to spare yourself the trouble of composing them.

MARIA CONSUELO D'ARANJUEZ.

Spicca received this letter early in the morning, and at mid-day he still sat in his chair, holding it in his hand. His face was very white, his head hung forward upon his breast, his thin fingers were stiffened upon the thin paper. Only the hardly perceptible rise and fall of the chest showed that he still breathed.

The clocks had already struck twelve when his old servant entered the room, a being thin, wizened, grey and noiseless as the ghost of a greyhound. He stood still a moment before his master, expecting that he would look up, then bent anxiously over him and felt his hands.

Spicca slowly raised his sunken eyes. "It will pass, Santi—it will pass," he said feebly.

Then he began to fold up the sheets slowly and with difficulty, but very neatly, as men of extraordinary skill with their hands do everything. Santi looked at him doubtfully and then got a glass and a bottle of cordial from a small carved press in the corner. Spicca drank the liqueur slowly and set the glass steadily upon the table.

"Bad news, Signor Conte?" asked the servant anxiously, and in a way which betrayed at once the kindly relations existing between the two.

"Very bad news," Spicca answered sadly and shaking his head.

Santi sighed, restored the cordial to the press and took up the glass, as though he were about to leave the room. But he still lingered near the table, glancing uneasily at his master as though he had something to say, but was hesitating to begin.

"What is it, Santi?" asked the count.

"I beg your pardon, Signor Conte—you have had bad news—if you will

allow me to speak, there are several small economies which could still be managed without too much inconveniencing you. Pardon the liberty, Signor Conte."

"I know, I know. But it is not money this time. I wish it were."

Santi's expression immediately lost much of its anxiety. He had shared his master's fallen fortunes and knew better than he what he meant by a few more small economies, as he called them. "God be praised, Signor Conte!" he said solemnly. "May I serve the breakfast?"

"I have no appetite, Santi. Go and eat, yourself."

"A little something?" Santi spoke in a coaxing way. "I have prepared a little mixed fry, with toast, as you like it, Signor Conte, and the salad is good to-day—ham and figs are also in the house. Let me lay the cloth—when you see, you will eat—and just one egg beaten up with a glass of red wine to begin—that will dispose the stomach."

Spicca shook his head again, but Santi paid no attention to the refusal and went about preparing the meal. When it was ready the old man suffered himself to be persuaded and ate a little. He was in reality stronger than he looked, and an extraordinary nervous energy still lurked beneath the appearance of a feebleness almost amounting to decrepitude. The little nourishment he took sufficed to restore the balance, and when he rose from the table, he was outwardly almost himself again. When a man has suffered great moral pain for years, he bears a new shock, even the worst, better than one who is hard hit in the midst of a placid and long habitual happiness. The soul can be taught to bear trouble as the great self-mortifiers of an earlier time taught their bodies to bear scourging. The process is painful but hardening.

"I feel better, Santi," said Spicca. "Your breakfast has done me good. You are an excellent doctor."

He turned away and took out his

pocket-book, not over well garnished. He found a ten franc note. Then he looked round and spoke in a gentle, kindly tone. "Santi—this trouble has nothing to do with money. You need a new pair of shoes, I am sure. Do you think that ten francs is enough?"

Santi bowed respectfully and took the money. "A thousand thanks, Signor Conte," he said.

Santi was a strange man, from the heart of the Abruzzi. He pocketed the note, but that night, when he had undressed his master and was arranging the things on the dressing-table, the ten francs found their way back into the black pocket-book. Spicca never counted and never knew.

He did not write to Maria Consuelo, for he was well aware that in her present state of mind she would undoubtedly burn his letter unopened, as she had said she would. Late in the day he went out, walked for an hour, entered the club and read the papers, and at last betook himself to the restaurant where Orsino dined when his people were out of town.

In due time, Orsino appeared, looking pale and ill-tempered. He caught sight of Spicca and went at once to the table where he sat.

"I have had a letter," said the young man. "I must speak to you. If you do not object, we will dine together."

"By all means. There is nothing like a thoroughly bad dinner to promote ill-feeling."

Orsino glanced at the old man in momentary surprise. But he knew his ways tolerably well, and was familiar with the chronic acidity of his speech. "You probably guess who has written to me," he resumed. "It was natural, perhaps, that she should have something to say, but what she actually says, is more than I was prepared to hear."

Spicca's eyes grew less dull and he turned an inquiring glance on his companion.

"When I tell you that in this letter, Madame d'Aranjuez has confided

to me the true story of her origin, I have probably said enough," continued the young man.

"You have said too much or too little," Spicca answered in an almost indifferent tone.

"How so?"

"Unless you tell me just what she has told you, or show me the letter, I cannot possibly judge of the truth of the tale."

Orsino raised his head angrily. "Do you mean me to doubt that Madame d'Aranjuez speaks the truth?" he asked.

"Calm yourself. Whatever Madame d'Aranjuez has written to you, she believes to be true. But she may have been herself deceived."

"In spite of documents—public registers—"

"Ah! Then she has told you about those certificates?"

"That—and a great deal more which concerns you."

"Precisely. A great deal more. I know all about the registers, as you may easily suppose, seeing that they concern two somewhat important acts in my own life, and that I was very careful to have those acts properly recorded, beyond the possibility of denial—beyond the possibility of denial," he repeated very slowly and emphatically. "Do you understand that?"

"It would not enter the mind of a sane person to doubt such evidence," answered Orsino rather scornfully.

"No, I suppose not. As you do not therefore come to me for confirmation of what is already undeniable, I cannot understand why you come to me at all in this matter, unless you do so on account of other things which Madame d'Aranjuez has written you, and of which you have so far kept me in ignorance."

Spicca spoke with a formal manner and in cold tones, drawing up his bent figure a little. A waiter came to the table and both men ordered their dinner. The interruption rather favoured the development of a hostile

feeling between them than otherwise.

"I will explain my reasons for coming to find you here," said Orsino when they were again alone.

"So far as I am concerned, no explanation is necessary. I am content not to understand. Moreover, this is a public place, in which we have accidentally met and dined together before."

"I did not come here by accident," answered Orsino. "And I did not come in order to give explanations, but to ask for one."

"Ah?" Spicca eyed him coolly.

"Yes. I wish to know why you have hated your daughter all her life, why you persecute her in every way, why you——"

"Will you kindly stop?"

The old man's voice grew suddenly clear and incisive, and Orsino broke off in the middle of his sentence. A moment's pause followed.

"I requested you to stop speaking," Spicca resumed, "because you were unconsciously making statements which have no foundation whatever in fact. Observe that I say, unconsciously. You are completely mistaken. I do not hate Madame d'Aranjuez. I love her with all my heart and soul. I do not persecute her in every way, nor in any way. On the contrary, her happiness is the only object of such life as I still have to live, and I have little but that life left to give her. I am in earnest, Orsino."

"I see you are. That makes what you say all the more surprising."

"No doubt it does. Madame d'Aranjuez has just written to you, and you have her letter in your pocket. She has told you in that letter a number of facts in her own life, as she sees them, and you look at them as she does. It is natural. To her and to you, I appear to be a monster of evil, a hideous incarnation of cruelty, a devil in short. Did she call me a devil in her letter?"

"She did."

"Precisely. She has also written to me informing me that I am Satan. There is a directness in the statement and a general disregard of probability which is not without charm. Nevertheless, I am Spicca, and not Beelzebub, her assurances to the contrary notwithstanding. You see how views may differ. You know much of her life, but you know nothing of mine, nor is it my intention to tell you anything about myself. But I will tell you this much. If I could do anything to mend matters, I would. If I could make it possible for you to marry Madame d'Aranjuez, being what you are, and fenced in as you are, I would. If I could tell you all the rest of the truth, which she does not know, nor dream of, I would. I am bound by a very solemn promise of secrecy, by something more than a promise in fact. Yet, if I could do good to her by breaking oaths, betraying confidence and trampling on the deepest obligations which can bind a man, I would. But that good cannot be done any more. That is all I can tell you."

"It is little enough. You could, and you can, tell the whole truth, as you call it, to Madame d'Aranjuez. I would advise you to do so, instead of embittering her life at every turn."

"I have not asked for your advice, Orsino. That she is unhappy, I know. That she hates me, is clear. She would not be the happier for hating me less, since nothing else would be changed. She need not think of me if the subject is disagreeable. In all other respects she is perfectly free. She is young, rich, and at liberty to go where she pleases and to do what she likes. So long as I am alive I shall watch over her——"

"And destroy every chance of happiness which presents itself," interrupted Orsino.

"I gave you some idea, the other night, of the happiness she might have enjoyed with the deceased Aranjuez. If I made a mistake in regard to what I saw him do,—I admit the possibility

of an error—I was nevertheless quite right in ridding her of the man. I have atoned for the mistake, if we call it so, in a way which you do not dream, nor she either. The good remains, for Aranjuez is buried.”

“You speak of secret atonement; I was not aware that you ever suffered from remorse.”

“Nor I,” answered Spicca drily.

“Then what do you mean?”

“You are questioning me, and I have warned you that I will tell you nothing about myself. You will confer a great favour upon me by not insisting.”

“Are you threatening me again?”

“I am not doing anything of the kind. I never threaten any one. I could kill you as easily as I killed Aranjuez, old and decrepit as I look; and I should be perfectly indifferent to the opprobrium of killing so young a man, though I think that, looking at us two, many people might suppose the advantage to be on your side rather than on mine. But young men nowadays do not learn to handle arms. Short of laying violent hands upon me, you will find it quite impossible to provoke me. I am almost old enough to be your grandfather, and I understand you very well. You love Madame d’Aranjuez. She knows that to marry you would be to bring about such a quarrel with your family as might ruin half your life, and she has

the rare courage to tell you so and to refuse your offer. You think that I can do something to help you and you are incensed because I am powerless, and furious because I objected to your leaving Rome in the same train with her, against her will. You are more furious still to-day because you have adopted her belief that I am a monster of iniquity. Observe that, apart from hindering you from a great piece of folly the other day, I have never interfered. I do not interfere now. As I said then, follow her if you please, persuade her to marry you if you can, quarrel with all your family if you like. It is nothing to me. Publish the banns of your marriage on the doors of the Capitol, and declare to the whole world that Madame d’Aranjuez, the future Princess Saracinesca, is the daughter of Count Spicca and Lucrezia Ferris, his lawful wife. There will be a little talk, but it will not hurt me. People have kept their marriages a secret for a whole lifetime before now. I do not care what you do, nor what the whole tribe of the Saracinesca may do, provided that none of you do harm to Maria Consuelo, nor bring useless suffering upon her. If any of you do that, I will kill you. That at least is a threat, if you like. Good-night.”

Thereupon Spicca rose suddenly from his seat, leaving his dinner unfinished, and went out.

(*To be continued.*)

A FRENCH PROVINCE IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

THE latter part of the seventeenth century is singularly deficient in works which could throw light on the social and intellectual condition of provincial life in France. The splendour of the court of Louis XIV., where all that the kingdom contained of illustrious by birth or talent was assembled, concentrated on itself the attention of the writers of the day, just as the monarch concentrated the powers of the State in his own hands; and the works of that epoch rarely afford us a glimpse of the country or of its inhabitants. A careless allusion in one of Mme. de Sévigné's letters to the citizens hanged at Rennes for not paying their taxes, and a few lines of La Bruyère describing the sufferings of the peasantry, comprise nearly all the information with regard to the state of the provinces to be found in the classical literature of the century of the Grand Monarch. All the more interesting, therefore, is the journal kept by the Abbé Fléchier during the assizes held at Clermont in 1665, in which he has given a lively picture of the manners and customs of the various classes of society in a secluded part of France, where a turbulent aristocracy defied the royal authority and exercised an uncontrolled sway over its vassals.

Fléchier, who later on, when Bishop of Nîmes, acquired a reputation for eloquence inferior only to that of Bossuet, was the son of a tradesman of Pernes in the diocese of Carpentras. At the age of fifteen he joined the order of Les Pères de la Doctrine Chrétienne, of which his uncle was superior, at Tarascon, became professor of literature, and afterwards was sent to teach rhetoric at Narbonne, where he also acquired some reputation by his sermons. After his uncle's death he left the order, and in 1659, being

then twenty-eight, he settled in Paris and applied himself assiduously to literature. Conrart, the secretary of the French Academy, introduced him to M. de Montausier, the husband of Julie d'Angennes, at whose house he met the surviving members of that brilliant society of nobles and men of letters which Mme. de Rambouillet had gathered round her in the earlier part of the century. The young Abbé's wit and eloquence, joined to his talent for Latin versification, a gift then highly appreciated, soon brought him into notice. After a residence of about two years in Paris, he entered the household of Louis Urbain Lefèvre de Caumartin, *maître des requêtes*, as tutor to his son M. de Boissy, and in that capacity accompanied him to Auvergne.

It was the last occasion upon which the assizes called *Les Grands Jours* were held with all the solemn formality, and put forth all the arbitrary powers with which that institution was invested. They consisted of special commissions named by the king, and sent with plenary powers as immediate representatives of the royal authority, to decide without appeal both civil and criminal cases in those provinces where, from one reason or another, the ordinary courts of law were unable to administer justice. In earlier times, while the kings of the third race were engaged in enlarging and consolidating their realm, these assizes recurred much more frequently. They were held regularly twice a year in districts which had been recently annexed to the Crown by the death of one of the great feudatories, or by conquest from the English. They thus helped to extend the royal authority over all France, and as that authority became more firmly established, they were

gradually superseded by the local tribunals. The universal disorganisation and lawlessness, which were the consequence of the English wars of the fifteenth century, and later on of the religious conflicts of the sixteenth, rendered it necessary to hold them in several provinces during the reigns of Francis I. and his successors ; but the stern administration of Richelieu, and his merciless repression of every symptom of insubordination on the part of the aristocracy, caused peace and order to prevail throughout France, and the supremacy of the king was everywhere acknowledged.

During the minority, however, of Louis XIV., a portion of the nobility, led by the Prince de Condé, strove to assert the independence of their order against the increasing absolutism of the State ; and the war of La Fronde may be considered as the last struggle of feudal liberty against personal government. Beaten on the field of battle and gradually excluded from nearly all participation in the administration of affairs, which Louis XIV. preferred to entrust to men of plebeian origin, the aristocracy still retained an almost unlimited power over their vassals. In the more remote parts of France they looked upon themselves as nearly independent of the Crown : they acknowledged no other law than their interests or their caprice ; and their inferiors had no defence against their tyranny and their rapacity. This was more especially the case in the wild and mountainous province of Auvergne, where the nobles, relying on the strength of their castles, defied the local authorities, or secured their complicity through intimidation. The crimes of the aristocracy, the murmurs of the people, and the complaints of the officials, at last constrained the King to adopt severe measures of repression, and by letters patent dated 31st August 1665, a commission of sixteen members of the Parliament of Paris, under the presidency of Henri de Novion, *président à mortier*, with M. de Caumartin, *maître des requêtes*, as keeper of

the seals, and Denis Talon as *procureur du roi*, was ordered to go to Clermont, with full powers to redress the grievances of the peasants, chastise the crimes of the nobles, and take the necessary measures to restore order.

M. de Caumartin was accompanied by his mother, his young wife, and M. de Boissy, his son by a former marriage ; and during the four months the assizes lasted, his house was the centre where his fellow judges, the principal citizens of Clermont, and those nobles who did not think it more prudent to leave the country, met in friendly intercourse under the watchful eyes of the Abbé Fléchier, who has handed down to us in his *Mémoires* a faithful record of their peculiarities and eccentricities. His little work is a masterpiece of graceful and witty narrative, and though probably intended merely for the amusement of his patrons the de Caumartins, and his other Parisian friends, its importance to the historian is very great from the truthfulness with which it depicts a state of society long since vanished. Fléchier shows us a fierce and haughty aristocracy still imbued with the rebellious spirit of the Middle Ages : a prosperous middle class strongly attached to its local customs and privileges ; and a peasantry, in many cases oppressed and ill-treated, in whose minds were already latent those germs of hatred and revolt destined to burst forth with such vehemence at the Revolution. The *Mémoires* are also a remarkable example of the intellectual and social authority which Paris already exercised over the rest of France, even in the days when the provinces still possessed much of their ancient independence. The capital could, even then, absorb into itself and completely transform all who came under its influence ; for we find the Abbé, a native of the south of France, affecting to look down on the provincials as barbarians, ridiculing their manners, and despising their literary efforts as sadly deficient in that supreme finish and perfection which

Paris alone could confer. He was, it is true, entitled to speak on the subject with some authority. It was, just then, an epoch of transition, when the slightly antiquated French of the days of Louis XIII., which to its prevailing tone of courtesy and distinction still added some traces of the rhetorical exaggeration and the taste for antithesis and word-play characteristic of the less cultured but more robust sixteenth century, was about to attain the highest degree of symmetry and elegance. Corneille, Pascal, Boileau, and Molière had already produced their earlier works; and Fléchier, by the dignity and purity of his style, may claim to be reckoned among those who most contributed to refine and polish the French tongue, and confer upon it that perfection of form which has rendered the great writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries models for whoever wishes to write with clearness and precision.

The Abbé gives us no information with regard to his journey from Paris, but opens his narrative with the arrival of the judges at Riom, where they stopped for a day's rest before making their entry into Clermont. A drive of a few hours separates Riom from Clermont, and as the judges, preceded by the *chevalier du guet* (officer of the watch) and his mounted police dressed in red, approached the town, they were met at intervals along the road by the principal officials of the municipality, by deputations from the neighbouring communities, and by the leading nobles of the province, who greeted them with complimentary speeches, to each of which suitable replies had to be made by the president, M de Novion. More deputations and more speeches from the clergy of the diocese, the religious orders, and the local bar awaited the Royal Commission on its arrival in the town; and the worthy people of Clermont fondly imagined that they had dazzled the Parisians by so much eloquence and erudition. But Fléchier,

who already bore the title of preacher to the court, does not conceal his disdain for these "wearisome displays," in which the *Grands Jours* were compared to the Last Judgment, and quotations from St. Augustine and St. Ambrose proved that those Fathers of the Church had foreseen and prophesied what was about to take place in Auvergne. These tedious formalities, however, were at last brought to an end; the judges were installed in their lodgings; M. Talon hastened to inspect the prisoners and ascertain for what number of criminals there might be room; and in a few days the assizes were opened.

At the request of the *procureur du roi*, the Bishop of Clermont issued a pastoral letter to be read in every parish on three consecutive Sundays, commanding all persons who could give information with regard to any crime, to come forward and denounce the culprits under pain of excommunication. The long list of outrages and abuses contained in this document may be considered as presenting a tolerably faithful picture of the disorder prevailing throughout the country. There had been assassinations and robberies, incendiarisms and acts of violence which had remained unpunished. The levy of taxes had been impeded, the execution of decrees and sentences hindered, and the ministers of justice intimidated. Public functionaries had been guilty of extortion and corruption, and some of the *seigneurs hauts justiciers*, who had power of life and death over their vassals, kept their prisoners in dungeons under ground, while others detained persons illegally in their castles. Others, again, levied tolls without authority, deprived the peasantry of their pasturage and forest rights, ill-treated the officials who received complaints against their exactions, and forced them to surrender the writs they had taken out.

As the public were excluded from the sittings of the court in all criminal cases, Fléchier had leisure to study

and record the features of the unknown world about him, where he evidently looked upon himself as an exile from civilisation. The town of Clermont, with its steep, narrow streets and gloomy houses, did not please him, and he saw nothing remarkable in it except the unusually large number of children in every family. The ladies of Clermont, he ungallantly declared, were ugly; and he gives a very satirical description of their ceremonious visits to the wives of the officials from Paris, in presence of whose superior elegance and manners they felt that their provincial ways seemed old-fashioned, and their rustic wit poor and trivial. They had not even the courage to visit alone, but came in a crowd, hoping thereby to be less remarked and to keep each other in countenance: they entered the apartment awkwardly and stiffly, some holding their arms crossed, others letting them hang down straight; and insignificant details of local gossip formed the only subject of their conversation. At the balls given by M. de Caumartin, where many of the nobles, who had no reason to fear a denunciation, came to pay their respects to the Royal Commissioners, the Abbé did not find that the behaviour of the provincials was much better. He admired, it is true, the gaiety and gracefulness of *la bourrée*, the national dance of Auvergne; but he was much shocked at the disputes which broke out among the ladies, who abused each other freely, and were sometimes on the point of proceeding to actual violence, using their muffs after the fashion of boxing-gloves, or pulling each other's hair.

There were, nevertheless, some ladies at Clermont, who aspired to a more intellectual life, and held advanced ideas with regard to the education of women. The question was evidently much discussed at the time, for the Abbé gives an account of a conversation on the subject at which he assisted, and repeats the indignant protests he heard against the slavery

in which it was the fashion to keep the minds of women, by withholding from them the liberty to study; as if they were not as capable as men of acquiring learning, or as if nature had deprived them of reason and bestowed on them purely exterior charms. Fléchier does not blame or ridicule these aspirations, nor confound them with the affected attempts of certain provincials to imitate the tone of the literary *salons* of Paris. It was at Vichy, where he passed a few days, that he met with specimens of the class which Molière had recently satirised, and who, like his heroines, looked upon Paris as "the grand assemblage of wonders, the centre of good taste, of wit, and of courtesy." The arrival at the little town of a preacher to the court, who had also the reputation of being a wit and a poet, caused great excitement among the visitors to the baths, and two ladies, whom Fléchier calls *des précieuses languissantes*, hastened to pay their respects to him, apparently under the impression that the mere fact of being seen in his society would give them a reputation for learning. They overwhelmed the Abbé with compliments, and expressed their happiness at meeting with a person from the court in that barbarous region; little suspecting what a cruelly satirical sketch the Abbé would present to his Parisian friends of the tall and ungainly form of one of his admirers, and of the multitude of patches which decorated the face of the other, leaving only her eyes and nose visible.

It was not, however, the provincials alone who provoked Fléchier's witticisms; among the little band of Parisians who considered themselves so superior to the people of Clermont, there was no dearth of subjects for his sarcastic pen. One of his most finished portraits is that of Madame Talon, the mother of the *procureur du roi*; a capital type of the serious, hard-working, narrow-minded *bourgeoise* of Paris. The more aristocratic

De Caumartins looked down on her as much their inferior in rank, and it was probably to excite their laughter that her peculiarities have been so minutely described. Meddlesome and fussy, possessed by a mania for organisation, and firmly convinced of the perfection of Parisian ways, Madame Talon had hardly arrived at Clermont when she undertook to stir up the sleepy country town, and to regulate everything and everybody in it. Taking advantage of the influence she derived from her son's position on the Royal Commission, she began by inspecting the weights and measures of the shopkeepers, and discovered to her great indignation that at Clermont the pound contained only thirteen or fourteen ounces instead of sixteen. The Commissioners, however, found it impossible to change the local customs, and could only issue a decree by which they fixed the prices of all articles during their stay; but Madame Talon, who still mistrusted the honesty of the provincials, obliged her tradesmen to bring their goods to her lodgings and weighed them herself. She next took in hand the reform of the religious orders, lectured the Ursuline nuns for not rising at four o'clock all the year round, criticised the management of the hospital, laid down rules for the care of the sick, and finally summoned the principal ladies of Clermont to establish an association for the relief of the poor according to the system adopted in Paris. "Such is the custom in Paris" was, indeed, in Madame Talon's opinion, a sufficient reason and an unanswerable argument in every difficulty; but the unfortunate associates were so lectured and browbeaten in the endeavour to raise them to her standard of perfection, that their meetings soon came to an end.

While Madame Talon was thus engaged in diffusing the superior culture of Paris among the benighted provincials, the Royal Commissioners were no less actively employed in establishing the supremacy of the law by their

energetic and summary mode of procedure. Their arrival at Clermont had spread terror throughout the district over which their jurisdiction extended. The nobles, but more especially those of the wilder and more mountainous regions, who had lived in the utmost lawlessness and defied all civil or religious authority, were filled with dismay. They recalled to mind all the evil deeds of their lives, and sought to stop the complaints of their vassals by offering compensation for the injustice and ill-treatment of the past, while those who felt that the accusations hanging over them were too serious to be met, fled the country.

The family of Canillac, one of the most wealthy and illustrious of Auvergne, whose principal branch, the De Beaufort-Canillac, had given two popes to the Church in the fourteenth century, seems to have most distinguished itself by the crimes of its members. The head of the family was then Jacques Timoléon, Marquis de Beaufort-Canillac, whom Fléchier terms the greatest and oldest sinner in the province; a man who for sixty years had gloried in his wickedness, feeling no remorse, and only answering the complaints of his victims with jeers. By the unscrupulous abuse of his feudal rights he imposed enormous taxes on his vassals under frivolous prettexts, and often encouraged them to commit crimes for which they were afterwards obliged to purchase forgiveness by heavy fines. A band of twelve malefactors, whom he maintained in his castle and called his twelve apostles, executed his orders and terrorised the country. The Parliament of Toulouse had condemned him to death some years previously; but as it was impossible to arrest him, he had been executed in effigy, and he could boast of having assisted at his own execution from a window of the house where he was hiding. But a Royal Commission like the *Grands Jours* was not to be defied as easily as a provincial parliament. At the first intimation of danger the marquis

hastened to take refuge in Spain ; he was therefore condemned to death in his absence, his property was confiscated, and his castles ordered to be razed to the ground. Other members of the family also saved their lives by a timely flight ; but Guillaume de Beaufort, *sénéchal* of Clermont, whom public opinion denounced as one of the worst, contrived to set aside the most incriminating documents and to bribe the hostile witnesses, so that the court, though convinced of his guilt, could only reprimand and fine him on some lesser charges. The least guilty of the family expiated the crimes of the others. The Vicomte de la Motte de Canillac at the head of a band of armed men had attacked another gentleman and killed one of his servants ; but the general lawlessness of the province was such, that he did not expect to be molested for what he considered a trivial offence which the king might be induced to pardon. He was, therefore, arrested at Clermont shortly after the beginning of the assizes ; his trial did not last long, and four hours after the sentence was pronounced, he was beheaded.

D'Espinchal, Seigneur de Massiac, a man whose unpunished crimes, according to Fléchier, were one of the principal reasons which determined the king to proclaim the *Grands Jours*, though far more guilty than De la Motte, succeeded in escaping. He was accused, among other things, of having oppressed his vassals, attempted to poison his wife, and killed one of his pages through jealousy. The brother of a person whom he had injured went to Paris to claim the protection of the king, but even there he was not in safety, for d'Espinchal caused him to be seized by his servants at the very gates of the Louvre, and carried off in a sedan-chair. He would probably have been assassinated in the outskirts of the city, had not some soldiers heard his cries for help and rescued him. D'Espinchal had been already condemned to death, but had defied all attempts of the authori-

ties to arrest him ; for the brilliancy of his wit and the charm of his conversation rendered him universally liked and appreciated among his fellow nobles, in spite of his violent and iniquitous conduct towards his inferiors, and they willingly helped to conceal him from the officers of justice. With a band of armed men he wandered through the mountains of Auvergne, never sleeping for two nights in the same place, and protected even by the Duc de Bouillon, governor of the province, who sought to obtain his pardon from the king. When the *Grands Jours* were opened he left the country, and entered the service of the Elector of Bavaria, where he rose to the rank of general, and in 1678 obtained a full pardon with permission to return to France.

The Baron de Sénagas, and the two Marquises du Palais, were also fortunate enough to take to flight in time. The acts of which they were accused show the incredible state of disorder which prevailed throughout Auvergne, and could only be repressed by energetic and arbitrary measures. The Baron de Sénagas seems to have considered himself quite independent of the authority of the State. He had hindered the collection of the king's taxes by violence, and imposed taxes of his own on several villages. He had seized the tithes of a priory, and pulled down a chapel to employ the materials in fortifying one of his castles. He was also accused of two or three assassinations, and of having illegally imprisoned many persons for the purpose of extorting ransom. The sentence pronounced on him in his absence was banishment for life ; his lands were confiscated, his castles razed, and his feudal rights restored to the Crown. The Marquises du Palais, father and son, were condemned to death. Their retainers had killed the servant of a gentleman who had a law-suit against them, and when a tipstaff and six police-officers came to arrest the assassins, the younger marquis, accompanied by several other nobles, drove them

away, pursued them to a neighbouring village, broke into the inn where they had taken refuge, killed three of them, and kept the others prisoners in his castle for some time.

The other nobles who had fled were also condemned to death in their absence. The same charges were brought against all. They had oppressed their vassals by merciless exactions, and lived in a state of incessant warfare with their neighbours: they had waylaid and assassinated their enemies, or pillaged and wrecked their houses; and such was the terror they inspired, that, even when a judge was found with the honesty and the courage to give a decision against them, the sentence of the court could not be carried out. The fugitives were executed in effigy; a mode of punishment which Fléchier much admires, and quaintly calls a happy invention of justice for covering with infamy those whom she cannot seize, and chastising crime in the absence of the criminal. The number of the condemned was so great that on one day as many as thirty paintings were exhibited at the place of execution, each representing the decapitation of a guilty noble whom a timely flight had placed beyond the reach of the law.

The direct intervention of the sovereign in defence of the oppressed peasantry inspired them with a feeling of confidence, and encouraged them to manifest openly the hatred of the aristocracy which had been long fermenting in their minds. Fléchier says that it was observed during the assizes how daring the peasants had grown, and with what readiness they came forward to bear witness against the nobles, though in many cases their complaints were frivolous or even unfounded. Their imagination, too, became strangely excited under the belief that the power of their oppressors was to be abolished. They fancied that one of the objects of the *Grands Jours* was to restore all the lands that had ever belonged to them, and that they were

entitled to re-enter into possession of the fields and vineyards sold by their forefathers. Many of them left off working, and assumed patronising airs towards their masters, graciously offering them testimonials of good conduct and promises of protection; while others, by their studied insolence, sought to provoke them to acts of violence which might furnish a pretext for denouncing them to the judges.

These manifestations of discontent were not, however, confined to the peasantry. A village curé was condemned at the *Grands Jours* to a year's banishment for having preached to his flock upon the tyrannical conduct of the king and his ministers, mingling his denunciation of the government and its heavy taxation with praise of the old Roman Republic. A charge of high treason had also been brought against Henri de Launoy, *avocat du roi*, at *Evereux*. He was reported to have said, while pleading a cause, that the king was a tyrant and ought to be forced to withdraw into a monastery as had been several of his predecessors, and the kingdom changed into a republic like that of Venice. The accusation was proved to have been false, and those who had made it were punished at the *Grands Jours*; but it serves as an indication of the ideas which were even then floating vaguely through the minds of the people. It shows that at the very moment when Louis XIV. was suppressing every trace of freedom in France by subjecting all the orders of the State to his immediate control, and creating at Versailles the most splendid palace and the most brilliant court of modern times, the first mutterings of the storm which was to sweep away his throne and its defenders had begun to be faintly heard among the mountains of Auvergne.

The *Grands Jours* were brought to a close on January 30th 1666, to the great relief both of the judges, who were longing to return to their beloved

Paris, and of those nobles who had not been accused and arrested, but whose consciences, nevertheless, still reproached them with some delinquencies, and who could not feel easy so long as the dreaded tribunal remained in the country. In four months no less than twelve thousand civil and criminal cases had been laid before the court; two hundred and seventy-three culprits had been condemned to be hanged, ninety-six to be banished, forty-four to be beheaded, thirty-two to be broken alive, and twenty-eight to be sent to the galleys. Although in the majority of these cases the flight of the accused had rendered the execution of the sentence impossible, yet this severity restored order throughout the province, repressed the tyranny of the nobles, and gave to those charged with the execution of the law the courage to perform their duty; so that M. de Novion could assure Colbert that, for the future, a single *hussier* would be able to execute legal decrees without the imposing military escort which had previously been indispensable. To commemorate this victory over lawlessness the king caused a medal to be struck, bearing on one side his effigy, and on the reverse an image of Justice holding in one hand the sword and scales, and with the other raising a kneeling figure representing the enfranchised province.

The official documents of the reign of Louis XIV. bear witness to his sincere desire to promote the welfare of his subjects and the prosperity of France. The king and his great minister Colbert were indefatigable in their efforts to purify the administration of justice, to codify the laws, to encourage public works, to abolish the restrictions on traffic between the different provinces, and establish uniformity of weights and measures throughout France. In carrying out these reforms Louis had to contend with the narrow

prejudices, the selfishness and apathy of the provincial parliaments, and the corruption and ignorance of the municipalities opposed to all progress. He committed, however, the fatal error of persevering in the jealous policy inaugurated by Richelieu, and sought by every means to weaken the authority of the aristocracy and depose them from their legitimate position as leaders of the people. Instead of granting to them a larger share in the administration of their provinces, but at the same time carefully protecting their subordinates against injustice and oppression, he attracted them to his court, and retained them there by titles and pensions, while the local government passed gradually into the hands of the *intendants*, generally chosen from among the *maîtres des requêtes*. Legal functionaries were thus substituted as much as possible for the nobility, as being more subservient to the royal will and more zealous for the extension of the royal prerogative whence their own authority was derived. At the close, however, of the following century, it was mainly *l'homme de loi*, the village attorney, or the member of the provincial bar, as M. Taine remarks, who inflamed the passions of the peasantry, and led the bands of infuriated savages by whom were swept away the institutions under which France had grown and prospered during a thousand years. What resistance could the nobles of that day oppose to the popular movement? They had lost all capacity for taking part in public life; they had ceased to exercise influence over the people. They still retained however their courage and their honour, and were faithful to their king unto death, whether they perished for his cause on the scaffold, or in the heroic struggle waged against the Revolution on the moors of Brittany and in the forests of La Vendée.

D. SAMPSON.

“CORSICA” BOSWELL.

EVERY one knows Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, and most people who have read it once have read it often; but much fewer people have read his first essay in the art of note-taking and personal description. Yet it is worth reading, and contains the portrait of an interesting man. The people of Corsica still remember Pascal Paoli with gratitude, and only a year ago removed his bones from their London burial-place to give them an honourable tomb in his own island. He was indeed, when Boswell visited him, engaged in a very difficult task. The people of Corsica were a race nearly barbarous, and had the virtues and the vices of barbarians. Simple in their living, virtuous, religious, and brave, their history is deeply stained with violence and blood. So weak was the law that early in the eighteenth century nearly every private injury was still punished by the *vendetta*, and nearly eight hundred persons were said to perish annually by it. For not only was a personal wrong punished by the assassination of the guilty individual, but the *vendetta transversa*, as it was called, extended to whole families: "If a man had received an injury, and could not find a proper opportunity to be revenged on his enemy personally, he revenged himself on his enemy's relations." It was plain that such a custom, long inveterate, indicated a contempt for law for which some reason was to be sought in the history of the island.

The fact was that Corsica had never had a national existence. From the beginning of the fourteenth century it had been under the power of the Republic of Genoa; but the tyranny and misgovernment of that State had excited perpetual outbreaks on the part of the inhabitants, in the course of which one concession after another was wrung

from the Republic, until by the beginning of the eighteenth century the Corsicans had secured a considerable amount of autonomy, while the Genoese only retained and garrisoned the seaport towns of Bastia, Calvi, San Fiorenzo, and Ajaccio. Even from these the Corsican patriotic party made frequent efforts to eject them, at one time under the leadership of Paoli's father, at another by electing as king Theodore Baron Neuhoﬀ, whose chequered career came to an end in London, soon after he had left a debtor's prison in 1756, from which he had been rescued by a subscription raised by Horace Walpole, having entered as his sole asset in the schedule of his bankruptcy "The Kingdom of Corsica." By this time the French Government had begun to fear that if Corsica succeeded in emancipating itself from Genoa, one of the Great Powers would take possession of it. Accordingly in 1738 by a treaty made at Versailles the King of France undertook to reduce the island to obedience to the Republic of Genoa, and Count de Boisseux was sent thither with troops. On his death in February 1739 the work which he had successfully begun was completed by Maillebois. The patriotic generals retired to Naples, and no further rising was attempted until the French troops were withdrawn in 1741, when the whole resources of France were required for the war with Austria. From 1745 to 1755 the old intermittent struggles of the Corsicans against the Genoese went on with varying success under Count Rivarola, Matra, and Gaffori; sometimes with only their own resources to depend upon, sometimes assisted by English ships, for Genoa was in alliance with France. In 1753 Gaffori was assassinated, it was believed at the instigation of the government of Genoa.

He had been "General," and had initiated a system of government sufficiently stable to work for two years without a successor in his office. It was not until 1755 that Pasquale de Paoli was elected General. In this same year the French again intervened, not this time to put down the Corsican government, but to prevent the expulsion of the Genoese garrisons from the seaport towns. The French army of occupation was commanded by Marbœuf and was sufficient to crush the islanders' aspirations for independence. Rousseau wrote bitterly of this interference with liberty, vowing his countrymen to be so slavishly minded, so wedded to a life of tyranny, that if they heard of one free man at the uttermost parts of the earth, they would go there for the purpose of killing him.

The problem therefore which Paoli had to solve was how to govern a wild and semi-barbarous race, to civilise them, to teach them respect for law, to educate them, and to persuade or force them to relinquish the *vendetta* which disgraced and weakened them, and yet at the same time to encourage their martial ardour and love of freedom without provoking the active hostility of the French garrison. For though he lived on good terms with the French officers, there was always present the fear that their passive attitude might be changed to one of active hostility, and even the measure of independence then enjoyed by the Corsicans be sacrificed, as actually happened in 1769. Meanwhile Paoli had some years of peace to carry on the reforms of government and manners which he had at heart. He was by no means absolute; his official position as General only gave him a casting vote in a supreme Council of nine, who were in their turn controlled by an elaborate system of popular election. But his personal influence seems for a time to have been unlimited, and to have been exercised in a manner which secured universal affection and respect. He endeavoured to stop the *vendetta transversa* by attaching marks of infamy to the assassin over and

above the penalty of death; and he laboured to inspire the people with a sense of dignity and responsibility. "Our State," he remarked to Boswell, "is young and still requires the leading strings. I am desirous that the Corsicans should be taught to walk of themselves. Therefore when they come to me to ask whom they shall choose for their *Padre del Commune* or other magistrate, I tell them, 'You know better than I do the able and honest men among your neighbours. Consider the consequences of your choice not only to yourselves but to the island generally.' In this manner I accustom them to feel their own importance as members of the State." These seem honest and statesmanlike sentiments, and if Paoli did not always act up to his theory he is not the only one who has so failed. Apart from his political position Paoli was a man of good education, a fair scholar, much devoted to literature, and fond of discussing questions of philology and other learning. When he came to London in 1769, after his escape from Corsica, he lived a good deal with the literary people. We hear of him entertaining Johnson, Reynolds, Goldsmith, and others of that set; and the speech attributed to him in regard to Goldsmith showed taste as well as politeness: "*M. Goldsmith est comme la mer, qui jette des perles et beaucoup d'autres belles choses sans s'en apercevoir.*" In his first interview with Johnson he discussed some points of learning so well, that the Doctor, who did not often deal in compliments, said, "Sir, you talk of language as if you had never done anything else but study it, instead of governing a nation." His private character was also peculiarly pure and unselfish; and his appearance noble and commanding. "He has the loftiest port of any man I have ever seen," said Johnson.

Such was the man whose fame attracted Boswell to visit Corsica in 1765. The object was not an unworthy one, and Boswell's treatment of his hero showed a good deal of the skill, and not a little of the unscrupulous persistence,

which characterised his later dealings with Johnson. He not only reported his public actions and words, but he watched him at receptions, at table, in his dressing-room; he put leading questions to him on all kinds of subjects, hardly concealing the note-book in which he recorded his answers. The result is a picture of a man of great good-sense, good temper, and candour; a man of enlightened views, without parade but at the same time with considerable dignity of person and address. He seems to have taken just that curious liking to Boswell which Johnson did, a liking not at all incompatible with a considerable dash of contempt. At first indeed Boswell's use of his note-book roused feelings in Paoli the reverse of friendly. He afterwards described his first impression to Miss Burney at Streatham:—"He came to my country, and he fetched me some letter of recommending him; but I was of the belief that he might be an impostor, and I supposed in my mind he was an espy; for I look away from him, and in a moment I look to him again and I behold his tablets. Oh! he was to the work of writing down all I say! Indeed I was angry. But soon I discovered he was no impostor and no espy; and I only find I was myself the monster he had come to discern. Oh, he is a very good man; I love him indeed; so cheerful! so gay! so pleasant! But at the first, oh, I was indeed angry!"

The journal composed by these means constantly amuses by its naïveté and self-exposure, as well as by the real skill displayed in delineating the hero and in observing society. Boswell begins with a great parade of his letter of introduction from Rousseau, who had already been invited to reside in the island as guide, philosopher, and friend, like Voltaire with Frederick the Great. After some delay Rousseau had answered Boswell's application by sending a letter telling him where to go and to whom to apply, but carefully abstaining from committing himself as sponsor for his discretion.

Quite content with the letter however Boswell sailed from Leghorn in September 1765 for Corsica, requiring "the bracing air of that island after a too long sojourn at sweet Siena." Of the licentiousness of his life in Italy he is always prating or hinting. He confides the secret to every one; and some Corsicans who sailed with him, and with whom he quickly became intimate, thought it necessary to warn him, "That he would be treated with the greatest hospitality by the islanders; but that if he attempted to debauch any of their women he might lay his account with instant death." With this salutary caution Boswell landed at Centuri. He is delighted to observe that the people believed him to be coming in a quasi-diplomatic capacity from the English government. He disclaimed it in such a way that they only thought him "a very close young man!" He was received with great kindness by every one to whom he brought letters, and passed on from house to house, and monastery to monastery, on his road to Sollacaro where Paoli resided. His first experience was a sermon from the parish priest at Centuri on hell, from which he reports a sentence:—"Saint Catherine of Siena wished to be laid on the mouth of that dreadful pit, that she might stop it up, so as no more unhappy souls might fall into it. I confess, my brethren, I have not the zeal of holy Saint Catherine. But I do what I can: I warn you how to avoid it." The next thing he retails is a breach of manners on his own part. There were scarcely any inns in Corsica, and he was constantly entertained in private houses; "But," says he, "I sometimes forgot myself, and imagining that I was in a public house called for what I wanted with a tone which one uses in calling to the waiters of a tavern. I did so at Tino, asking for a variety of things at once: when Signora Tomasi perceiving my mistake looked in my face and smiled, saying with much calmness and good nature, '*Una cosa dopo un'altra,*

Signore." Having thus anticipated involuntarily the hero of *She Stoops to Conquer*, and having received such a snub (which probably not another man in the world would have published) he proceeds to the capital Corte. He describes the university and its library there, but what most interested him was a visit to the prison and the hangman. "There were then three criminals in the Castle: a man for the murder of his wife; a married woman who had hired one of her servants to strangle a woman of whom she was jealous; and the servant who had actually perpetrated the barbarous deed. They were brought out from the cells that I might talk with them. The murderer of his wife had a stupid and hardened appearance, and told me he did it at the instigation of the devil. The servant was a poor, despicable wretch. He had at first accused his mistress, but was afterwards prevailed with to deny his accusation, upon which he was put to the torture, by having lighted matches held between his fingers. This made him return to what he had formerly said, so as to be a strong evidence against his mistress. His hands were so miserably scorched that he was a piteous object. I asked him why he had committed such a crime; he said '*Perche era senza spirito.*' The lady seemed of a bold and resolute spirit. She spoke to me with great firmness, and denied her guilt, saying with a contemptuous smile, as she pointed to her servant, 'They can force that creature to say what they please.'" Boswell, not content with this charming interview, next visits the hangman, whom he calls a great curiosity. "Being held in the utmost detestation he must not live like another inhabitant of the island. He was obliged to take refuge in the Castle, and there he was kept in a little corner turret, where he had just room for a miserable bed, and a little bit of fire to dress such victuals for himself as were sufficient to keep him alive, for nobody would have any intercourse with him, but all

turned their backs upon him. I went up and looked at him, and a more dirty, rueful, spectacle I never beheld. He seemed sensible of his situation, and held down his head like an abhorred outcast." This unhappy wretch was a Sicilian, of such a villainous cast of countenance, that on his coming to Paoli with a message, the General at once exclaimed "*Ecco il boia!* behold our hangman!" ; an instance, thinks Boswell, of his wonderful talent for physiognomy. No Corsican had hitherto been persuaded, even by the hope of escaping the gallows, to undertake the office. Before leaving the island, however, Boswell hears that his friend of the scorched fingers had volunteered for the post and had been appointed; and he reports a discussion between himself and Paoli as to whether it was to the honour of Corsica or no that the hangman should be a native.

After these cheerful sights our traveller leaves Corte and proceeds to visit Paoli. He plumes himself on being among men of Spartan simplicity, and on adapting himself to their life. The Great Chancellor sends his little boy to his wife to fetch the Great Seal to sign his passport, and Boswell "thinks himself in the house of Cincinnatus." On his journey he stops by a stream to dine on chestnuts and the water of the brook, and at once compares himself to the *prisca gens mortalium*. So virtuous is he, so overflowing with Spartan simplicity, that he harangues the people of Bastelica, who complained of miserable want, on the happiness of their primitive state of poverty, and warned them against "a state of refinement and vice; and that they should beware of luxury." He quite forgets his peccadilloes in "sweet Siena" and all the "delights of Tuscany," and fancies he is longing for primitive simplicity and a diet of chestnuts and clear water. He particularly prides himself on an answer to some native who asked why the English did not believe in the Pope. "Because they

are too far off," said Boswell. "Too far off!" was the reply. "Why, Sicily is as far off as England; yet in Sicily they believe in the Pope." "Oh!" said Boswell, "we are ten times farther off than Sicily." "Aha," said he, and seemed satisfied. "I question much," adds Boswell with delightful satisfaction, "whether any of the learned reasonings of our Protestant divines would have had so good an effect."

The first meeting with Paoli is described with the same parade of minuteness as that with Johnson. He makes much of his fright and awe, of his deep feeling that he is standing in the presence of a really great man. He has however enough presence of mind to notice his complexion, clothes, and carriage. The General had assumed a dress of green and gold in place of the ordinary Corsican habit, because he thought a little elegance necessary in the company of the French. To his presence Boswell is at length ushered overwhelmed with the "workings of sensibility" in his mind. "He asked me what were my commands for him. I presented him a letter from Count Rivarola, and when he had read it, I showed him my letter of Rousseau. He was polite but very reserved. I had stood in the presence of many a prince, but I never had such a trial as in the presence of Paoli. He was a great physiognomist. In consequence of his being in continual danger from treachery and assassination, he has formed a habit of studiously examining every new face. For ten minutes we walked backwards and forwards through the room, hardly saying a word, while he looked at me, with a steadfast and penetrating eye, as if he searched my very soul." Boswell was not however easily discouraged in his favourite pursuit of lion-hunting. The reserve wore off after a while, and Boswell presently ventured on a compliment: "Sir, I am on my travels and have lately visited Rome. I am come from seeing the ruins of one brave and free

people; I now see the rise of another." The little speech had no doubt been carefully prepared, and one can imagine its half-timid, half-pompous delivery. Paoli in reply pointed out that the Corsicans had no thought of anything but a modest independence, and had no idea of rivalling great States. Yet a compliment is a good beginning for a conversation, and they seem to have got on more easily after this, until summoned to the chamber where Paoli with some dozen of his immediate followers dined. Boswell felt himself under "some restraint in such a circle of heroes," but he nevertheless proceeded to question the General on a variety of subjects, politics, history, and literature. "My humility wore off. I no longer anxiously thought of myself; my whole attention was employed in listening to the illustrious commander of a nation." He might have added, as we know, that he was also engaged in taking notes, however incredible in the circumstances.

The longer he stayed the more intimate did he become with Paoli, and the more delighted with his adventure. To his intense gratification he was attended by guards when he rode out, was mounted on Paoli's horse with "rich furniture of crimson velvet and broad gold lace," and could indulge in a feeling of "state and distinction," with which, he adds gravely, "mankind are so strangely intoxicated." He listened to Paoli's conversation, which seems to have been that of a high-minded and cultivated man, with a kind of feeling that the noble sentiments expressed were his own. "I enjoyed a sort of luxury of noble sentiment. To hear these arguments [for the being and attributes of God] repeated with graceful energy by the illustrious Paoli, in the midst of his heroic nobles, was admirable. I never felt my mind more elevated." In spite however of these elevated feelings he did not refrain from taking the General into his confidence on the old subject of personal licentiousness.

This is evident from the repeated lectures which he listens to from him on the subject and the good advice as to marriage which he receives. On another occasion, he tried to draw Paoli into censuring the infidelity of Frederick the Great. But the soldier felt too keen a sympathy with the consummate general, and could only be got to say, "*C'est une belle consolation pour un vieux Général mourant. En peu de temps vous ne serez plus !*" Boswell in his turn urged him to marry and have a son to succeed him. "Sir," he replied, "what security can I have that my son will think and act as I do? What sort of a son had Cicero, and what Marcus Aurelius?" One secret of Paoli's popularity is indicated by Boswell, namely, that he had himself a genuine belief in the fine qualities of his people. "Go among them," he said; "the more you talk with them you will do me the greater pleasure. Forget the meanness of their apparel. Hear their sentiments; you will find honour and sense and abilities among these poor men." In return for this their belief in him was enthusiastic. "This great man whom God has sent to deliver us," they called him; and the Abbé Rostini aptly described the general feeling by saying, "We are not afraid that our General will deceive us, nor that he will let himself be deceived."

Boswell's confidences on the subject of his free living were not the only ones he bestowed on Paoli. He tried him, as he afterwards did Johnson, with his own half affected doubts and religious scruples; and he received much the same reproof, though in gentler terms, as he got from Johnson. "All this," said Paoli, "is melancholy. I have also studied metaphysics. I know the arguments for fate and free will, for the materiality or immateriality of the soul, and even the subtle arguments for and against the existence of matter. But let us leave these disputes to the idle. I hold always one great object. I never feel

a moment of despondency." Paoli however had his weakness too. This was a half superstitious belief in dreams which he declared to have often been practically confirmed. "I can give you no explanation," he said; "I only tell you facts. Sometimes I have been mistaken, but in general these visions have proved true." And whether he did really believe in a spiritual origin of these dreams or not, he evidently found it useful that the belief should prevail among his simple people.

Such was the man whom Boswell, true worshipper of excellence as he understood it, delighted to honour both in his time of power in Corsica and afterwards when in exile in London. The book, with its elaborate historical introduction (a really careful piece of work considering all things, but remorselessly cut away by its latest editor), does not contain a full-length portrait as does the *Life of Dr. Johnson*; but it gives us a sketch in a style both amusing and interesting, with many of the characteristics of the greater work. The simplicity with which he displays himself in a ridiculous position may be illustrated by a parting extract, the story of his behaviour to a fierce-looking guide, after bidding farewell to Paoli. "One of the guides called Ambrosio was a strange iron-coloured fearless creature. He had been much in war; careless of wounds he was coolly intent on destroying the enemy. He told me, as a good anecdote, that having been so lucky as to get a view of two Genoese exactly in a line, he took his aim and shot them both through the head at once. He talked of this as one would talk of shooting a couple of crows. I was sure I need be under no apprehension; but I don't know how, I desired Ambrosio to march before me that I might see him. I was on my guard how I treated him. But as sickness frets one's temper, I sometimes forgot myself and called him *bestia* (blockhead); and once when he was at a loss which way to go, I fell into a passion and called to him, '*Mi*

miraviglio che un uomo si bravo può esser sì stupido. (I am amazed that so brave a man can be so stupid.)' However by afterwards calling him friend, and speaking softly to him, I soon made him forget my ill humour, and we proceeded as before."

So our poor hero-worshipping Bozzy got home safely with his Corsican dogs and his Corsican dress, in which latter he paraded to the infinite laughter of his friends at the Shakespeare Jubilee. The subsequent career of his hero is matter of history and may be briefly recapitulated. Two months before the birth of Napoleon Bonaparte, in June 1769, the French formally annexed Corsica. Paoli left the island after a gallant struggle and came to England, where Horace Walpole (not impressed as was Johnson by "the loftiness of his port") saw him at Court,— "Dressed in scarlet and gold, though the simplicity of his appearance had not given me the slightest suspicion of anything remarkable in him. The King and Queen both took great notice of him. He has just made a tour to Bath, Oxford, etc., and was received with much distinction" (*Letter to Sir Horace Mann, November 6th, 1769*). His English residence or exile lasted over twenty years. In 1789, on the motion of Mirabeau, he was recalled and appointed Chief Governor of the island under the King of France. He remained faithful to the French Government until the execution of Louis XVI. in 1793. After that event he induced all the island, except the towns of Bastia, San Fiorenzo, and Calvi, in which there were French garrisons, to refuse allegiance to the Convention. The *Consulta-Générale*

named Paoli *Generalissimo*, and with the aid of the English fleet he drove the French out of the island. It was in these operations, in the summer of 1794, that Nelson first rose to distinction, and it was during the bombardment of Calvi that he lost his eye. In June of this year the assembly at Corte voted that the island should be annexed to Great Britain. A deputation was sent to London to make the offer, which was accepted. It was supposed that Paoli would have been named Governor, but in fact Sir Gilbert Eliot was appointed. It was clearly impossible that Paoli could stay in Corsica except as the first man in the country; he therefore returned to England, accepted a pension, and lived in retirement near London until his death in 1807. Corsica reverted to France in 1797. Bonaparte had excited a rebellion against the English on the pretext of nationality, and the British fleet was ordered to carry off the English troops from Corsica, Elba, and Caprera. Paoli therefore lived to see the cause of Corsican independence, to which so much of his life had been given, finally defeated. Corsica shared the fate of other small nationalities in the midst of great and jealous neighbours. But he may have been consoled by reflecting that his exertions in the direction of civilising and educating his people had not been equally abortive. His name is still beloved in the island; and we should be grateful to Boswell for having preserved for us a picture of the man in the time of his greatest power and success.

E. S. SHUCKBURGH.

LITERARY TRAMPS.

THE Literary Tramp is no new thing. Thousands of years ago a blind one sang of the beauty of Helen and the valour of Achilles. Nearer our own days palmers, with scrip and scallop-shell, told tales for bread as they tramped on towards the Holy Land, or home from it. Troubadours sang as they strolled from castle to castle, and became the Fathers of Literature. Then literature ceased to go on foot. When it could not ride, as Chaucer did, it stayed at home. Bad roads, sparse habitations, above all, the growth of cities, did away with literary vagabondage. Literature almost forgot nature in time, and the tramp took to garrets rather than to highways, and wrote idyls in bed to keep warm. Only within the last hundred years has literature again found feet, and the pleasant spectacle of its makers tramping alone or in couples again become prominent.

Almost the first of literary tramps, if indeed they come within the description at all, were Shelley and Mary Godwin. They have left little trace of their adventures, yet that they could walk, or thought they could, is evident in their plan to go on foot from Paris to Lausanne. We catch a fleeting glimpse of them trudging with Jane Clairmont through the dust, and grumbling bitterly at the evil fare and housing of vagabondage, the two women riding by turns on their only donkey till a sprained ankle promoted Shelley himself to ride, and they had to buy "a chariot." The poorest of tramps they must have been, for not love of nature but scarcity of gold put them on their feet. What the natives of the country thought of them no man may say, for the girls trudged in black silk gowns, and were of the hated nation. Doubtless also they trudged

along in the kid slippers and silk stockings, and the corded and iron-busked stays, that were of that day. No wonder the poet got a "sprain!"

A stouter, if less romantic, pair of pedestrians were James and Harriet Martineau, who in 1822 made a tour on foot together in Scotland, walking five hundred miles in a month. Miss Martineau was always a capital walker while she had health, and Wordsworth accused her of "walking the legs off" of half the gentlemen of Ambleside. For all that she was the most unimaginative of women. She had a "manly stride," and never nymph or pixie, elf or dryad, lured her to follow streams, or to dream beneath rustling foliage.

Robert Browning and "Sarianna" were another brother and sister who covered miles upon miles together. The peculiarity of their journeys lies in the fact that they did not begin them till both were middle-aged. They formed their companionship after Mrs. Browning's death, with whose feeble steps neither of them had ever kept pace. Browning speaks of seventeen-mile walks with Sarianna, and records nine miles accomplished in less than two hours, which certainly required more than the usual "manly stride" from his companion.

The Wordsworths, brother and sister, were splendid examples of literary tramping. Mrs. Wordsworth told Harriet Martineau that William and Dorothy sometimes walked forty miles a day. Tours on foot were a large part of their experience together. The first thing they did after their reunion in 1794 was to start off upon a little stroll, of which Dorothy wrote:—"I walked with my brother from Kendal to Grasmere, eighteen miles: and afterwards to Keswick, fifteen miles,

through the most delightful country that ever was seen." In November 1797 they started upon a pedestrian tour with Coleridge along the sea-coast. A little later in the same month the three set out at half-past four of a dark and cloudy afternoon, walking eight miles for a start, while the two poets laid the plan of a ballad with the sale of which they hoped to pay the expenses of the excursion. The methods of the two did not run easily together, and *The Ancient Mariner* was soon given over entirely to Coleridge.

Dorothy did not walk in a black silk gown. Doubts are reasonable if even she had one. Her usual walking costume was a "little jacket and brown dress." Coleridge we may imagine in the same raiment in which he afterwards travelled with the two in Scotland; the soiled nankeen trousers, the blue coat with brass buttons, in which he mounted a Unitarian pulpit and preached a candidate sermon. Wordsworth doubtless also wore his usual suit of dingy brown, with a flapping broad-brimmed straw hat to protect his weak eyes. They were not three graces, this distinguished trio of tramps! Wordsworth was not a handsome man, not even an impressive man. In spite of the fact that the brother and sister walked, according to De Quincey's calculation, between one hundred and seventy and one hundred and eighty thousand miles, his legs were the worst part of him, and the total effect of his narrow person was even more uncomely in movement than in repose. His walk was a roll and a lunge, with eyes fixed on the ground. "Mumbly on his legs," the neighbours described him. Once Dorothy, walking farther behind him than usual and thus getting a better view, was heard to exclaim discontentedly several times, "Can that be William?" Dorothy herself was short and slight, with such a gipsy tan as is rarely seen upon an English face. Her eyes were not soft, nor were they fierce or bold, but they were wild and startling, and hurried in their motion

like those of some wild wood-creature. This same glancing quickness, according to De Quincey, characterised all her motions, although like her brother she stooped awkwardly in walking. "Humming and booing about" the peasants saw the poet, and his sister of whom he wrote,

She gave me ears, she gave me eyes.

"Miss Dorothy kept close behind him," a neighbour said, "and she picked up the bits as he let 'em fall, and took 'em down, and put 'em together on paper for him. And you may be very well sure as how she didn't understand nor make sense out of 'em, and I doubt that he didn't know much more about 'em either himself; but however there's a good many folks as do, I dare say."

Wordsworth sometimes had another foot-mate. Once he found Christopher North directing some road-building near Elleray, Wilson's own cottage. Christopher was in slippers, but joining Wordsworth walked miles with him till not only the slippers were worn entirely away, but socks as well.

Wordsworth wrote of his own zest for walking. "My lamented friend Southey would have been a Benedictine monk in a convent with an inexhaustible library. Books were his passion, wandering was mine. Had I been born in a class deprived of liberal education, it is not unlikely that, strong in body, I should have taken to a way of life such as that in which my Wanderer passed the greater part of his days." At seventy-one Wordsworth wrote of being four hours on foot, even though he confessed at fifty-nine that he was unable to take so much out of his body by walking as formerly. Yet at sixty-one he ran twenty miles a day beside the carriage in which his daughter Dora drove. Poor Dorothy gave in sooner. The twilight of her reason settled upon her and confined her to her own home for more than twenty years, till her death in 1855.

Another brother and sister were good

foot-mates although no great lovers of nature. They prattled of pleasant walks, but never of ardent mountain climbs and plunges into wild abysses. Mary Lamb wrote after a visit to Brighton in 1817 to Dorothy Wordsworth (she being fifty-five and Dorothy nine or ten years younger)—“Charles and I played truant and wandered among the hills, which we magnified into little mountains and almost as good as Westmoreland scenery. Certainly we made discoveries of many pleasant walks which few of the Brighton visitors ever dreamed of, for like as is the case in London, after the first two or three miles we were sure to find ourselves in a perfect solitude. I hope we shall meet before the walking faculties of either of us fail. You say you can walk fifteen miles with ease; that is exactly my stint, and more fatigues me.”

Smooth roads and easy footfalls were evidently the ideal of pleasant walks to the Lambs, to whom the Brighton downs were as good as Westmoreland mountains. It almost seems that they walked chiefly to rid themselves of nervous irritability. There is nothing to indicate love of nature in Mary Lamb's writing, and Charles openly declared himself a stranger to the shapes and textures of the commonest trees, herbs, flowers, “Not from the circumstance of my being town-born, for I should have brought the same unobservant spirit into the world with me had I seen it first on Devon's leafy shores.” Nor did he care for the sea. “I cannot stand all day,” he wrote, “on the naked beach watching the capricious hues of the sea shifting like the hues of a dying mullet. When I gaze on the sea I want to be on it, over it, across it. It binds me with chains as with iron. The salt foam seems to nourish a spleen. I am not half so good-natured by the sea as by the milder waters of my native river.” He cared no more for mountains. Rather would he be “shirtless and bootless in London,” than amid such

summits and mists as Ossian sang. The scenery of the Salutation Inn was more to his taste. He did not hunger for the horizon. The mystery and enchantment of distance never lured him over moor and mountain, brake and fell. He liked *near* things, neighbourly, smiling, open-hearted objects, books, tankards, pipes, cards, snuff-boxes, smiles, chatter. Still he liked to walk. Doubtless like Leigh Hunt, he “felt a respect for his leg every time he lifted it up.” He could not sit and think, he said (which suggests nervous irritability), so when he was not reading he was walking. Afterwards as the Superannuated Man, he looks back half wistfully upon the ancient bondage which made holidays so fair and precious, and laments that now is no need to walk thirty miles a day to make the most of those transient delights. Then what a cockney's-out-upon-a-holiday is the retrospect in “Old China,” of pleasant walks, lunch-baskets, ale, table-cloths, landladies. Their walks leave them only such memories as may be acquired within sound of Bow Bells.

The best foot-mates, far and away, of our century were William and Mary Howitt. They began to walk on their wedding-day, two prim young Quakers, honeymooning among hedgerows like the rustic *ouvriers* of France; and they continued to walk vigorously together during the space of almost two generations of men. A year later they walked five hundred miles among the Scotch mountains, carrying light luggage on their backs and resting at rough inns or rougher cots. They climbed Ben Lomond, wading streams, crawling over bogs, and finally grappling hand and foot with a terrible cone, from the peak of which they gazed upon a prospect to fill the eye of the gods. It was a wild tramp, taken in 1824, and was surely a return of primeval instincts under the quaint serenity of the Quaker guise.

Walking was not fashionable then. Respectability went in gigs, and he who walked, particularly she, was in

popular esteem a vagrant. To see a fair English girl springing across torrents on stepping stones, or carried on a brawny Highlander's back, scrambling through bracken like some woodland creature, and sliding down sheer defiles, was enough to make the peasants fancy the two stark mad. They heard among the mountains of another crazy pair who had lately passed that way. These were Christopher North, the leaping, wrestling, cock-fighting Professor of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh, and his young wife, he carrying about a quarter of a hundred-weight of provisions on his back, she about fourteen pounds.

The Howitts loved nature, but not as poets and artists do, those pagans of our world. They loved it in the sober, old-fashioned way of the intelligent and cultivated multitude, with no illumination as to "moods," intense or occult, transfiguring the landscape. Trees were trees to them, not sentient rapture and agonies; mountains were mountains, rivers were rivers, just as they were to Gainsborough and Lawrence. The actual nature and its wholesome physical influence upon themselves in mind and body, were enough for the active, objective pair, whose own natures had no mysteries, no subtleties, to be mirrored in a landscape.

During all their long married life, these devoted companions never missed an opportunity for a protracted excursion, and in their daily rambles they walked miles enough to go round the world. In the fifty-first year of their marriage they might reasonably be considered old people, Mrs. Howitt seventy-four, her husband eighty. At such ages the most faithful and sympathetic as well as the most active companionship has usually become a fireside one, and memory, not legs, the enduring bond. Yet here is this mighty couple, stronger, more enduring, than any running youth and maid of classic story, starting forth one August morning to climb an Alp of the Tyrol!

To be sure they do not now carry their personal belongings and provisions, but hire a man for the work. Seventy-four and Eighty started from the village of Taufers, up a steep and ever-mounting road, too steep for vehicles. They walked five hours, till they "were getting weary." It began to rain, but these dauntless youths walked on and on in narrow paths through grassy fields full of flowers. At dusk they came to the *chalet* of a tenant farmer. The wife was baking cakes for supper, the husband and his men eating them. The apparition of the "outlandish couple" so high above the earth, a height where old age is almost absolutely unknown, created as much astonishment as a comet would have done. But they were made welcome, and cordially entertained to supper. Where did they sleep? In the barn, to be sure; on fresh, sweet hay, the bed most affected by youthful vagabonds. Seventy-four and Eighty slept two nights on the hay, climbing twice to the mountain top between times, with strong longing to reach distant glaciers, but finding daylight too short. On the second morning when Seventy-four woke, Eighty had already left his hay for a morning stroll. He returned to breakfast jauntily sporting his hat trimmed with flowers, in Tyrolean fashion.

The open-air feeling of space, atmosphere, largeness, freshness and beauty, pervades the Autobiography. The excursion planned for "dear old father's" eighty-fifth birthday was abandoned only because of the rain. They climbed Monte Carvo together, and they wandered, like youths in an idyll, over the Campagna, gathering flowers. In the eighty-seventh year that William saw, when Mary had seen fourscore and one, she wrote: "Father and I have just come in from a pleasant walk right into the country amongst picturesque houses and such ancient orchards and park-like fields, scattered over with grand old Spanish chestnuts."

Mr. Howitt died in 1879, aged

eighty-nine years. No more the faithful footmates of sixty wedded years trudge side by side. But not yet does the widowed one sit down quietly at home, and know the poms and glories of this radiant world no more. She writes that she takes "quiet little strolls," and gathers the flowers her husband loved. She lives to see eighty-nine years, then gently falls asleep, at exactly the age her husband ceased to walk.

"One fine summer evening of 1824 the inhabitants of a primitive northern village saw two travellers, apparently man and wife, come into the village dressed like tinkers or gipsies. The man was tall, broad-shouldered, and of stalwart build; his fair hair floated redundant over neck and shoulders, his red whiskers were of portentous size. He bore himself with the air of a strong man rejoicing in his strength. On his back was a capacious knapsack, and his slouched hat, garnished with fishing-hooks and tackle, showed he was as much addicted to fishing as to making spoons. The appearance of his companion contrasted strikingly with that of her spouse. She was of slim and fragile form, and more like a lady in her walk and bearing than any tinker's wife that had ever been seen in those parts. The natives were somewhat surprised to see this great fellow making for the best inn, the Gordon Arms, where the singular pair actually took up their quarters for several days. They were in the habit of sallying forth, each armed with a fishing-rod, a circumstance, the novelty of which as regards the tinker's wife excited no small curiosity, and many conjectures were hazarded as to the real character of the mysterious couple." So wrote one who saw burly Christopher North and his wife on the vagabondage which Mary Howitt described as, "A species of bee and butterfly flight, sipping pungent juice and alighting upon bloom, for whenever they found a particularly romantic spot or an attractive cottage there they stopped for days, while the hus-

band fished, the wife rested, and both explored the region round about."

One morning, in Glenorchy, Wilson started out early to fish in Loch Toila. Its nearest point was thirteen miles from his lodging. On reaching it and unscrewing the butt end of his fishing-rod to get the top, he found he had forgotten it. Nothing daunted he walked back, breakfasted, made his rod complete, and walked again to Loch Toila. All the long summer day he fished, and after sunset started for home with a full basket. Feeling somewhat fatigued, and passing a familiar farmhouse, he stopped to ask for food. It was near midnight, and he routed the family from bed. The mistress brought him a full bottle of whisky and a can of milk. He poured half the whisky into half the milk and drank it off at a draught. While his hostess was still staring in amazement, he poured the remaining milk and whisky together, and finished the mixture. He then proceeded homeward, having performed a journey of not less than seventy miles!

Between the 5th of July and the 26th of August this couple walked three hundred and fifty miles in the Highlands, "fishing, eating, and staring," Professor Wilson wrote. Unlike bee and butterfly, he carried death and devastation everywhere. One almost shudders to read how much of harmless, happy life went out for ever to make a giant's holiday. He killed one hundred and seventy dozen of trout; one day nineteen dozen and a half, another seven dozen. From Loch Awe in three days he took seventy-six pounds of fish, all with the fly. He shot two roebucks; and he wrote, "I nearly caught a red deer by the tail; *I was within half a mile of it at farthest!*"

On their return the pair, particularly the lady, were the lions of Edinburgh. So far from presenting the weatherbeaten appearance expected, Mrs. Wilson was declared to be "bonnier than ever." It is a little

curious that this lady, who walked on one day of this tramp twenty-five miles, should have died prematurely, some years afterwards, because of insufficient bodily exercise.

Various good walkers have died and left no literary trace of their rambles. Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall were of these, who covered untold miles together and made no note of them. Others do not come within the scope of this paper for the reason that they walked not in pairs but alone. Mary Russell Mitford declared herself "perfectly uncomfortable" without a daily walk of ten miles, and congratulated herself that a friend, come to dwell nine miles away from her, was within calling and walking distance. There is a funny description of this spinster taking long solitary walks at night with a lantern. This would seem to argue no love of nature as incentive to tramping. The dainty Pre-Raphaelitism of the natural descriptions in her books, however, shows that she loved it in her own prim small way.

The Brontë sisters appear to have been almost always walking; one or the other of them coming into every picture of that dreary Yorkshire parsonage, as fresh from the breezy moors. But they walked little in pairs, and carried their passionate hearts and fettered longings out under the gray skies in solitude.

Of our own day George Eliot and Mr. Lewes, miserable invalids though they were, made no mean showing as foot-people. George Eliot's letters and diaries show that scarcely a day was without its walk. One day the pair in company with Mr. Herbert Spencer are five hours on foot. But no gipsy tramps and romantic adventures were in that united history. Their walks too were never counted by miles, but by the time spent on them out of doors. Those slow walks were as eminently respectable as the pursuit of queer insects, and strange fish, and fleeing

health, could possibly be, as decorous as George Eliot's own highly moral and self-conscious letters. There were no "wanderings." Never was there a "saunter," delicious relic of fair ancient beggary when *sans-terres* lived more gaily than lords of broad domains. They took "constitutionals," and for the stomach's sake, not the imagination's. George Eliot's were the shut-in views of one born in a flat country; mere peeps at hedgerows, orchards, meadows, gardens, commons. She sees colour strongly, but not tender or subtle colour; always the bright yellow of the broom, the vivid green of grass, the red and gray of rocks, the gold of sandy beaches, the smart hues of flowers. The "wide" sky, to be sure, comes continually into her glimpses and her letters, but never the beckoning horizon, never the beguiling distance; only and always the well behaved "blue" directly over her head. She hated the wind, and incessantly complained of it, but breezes were "sweet," and sunshine necessary to her. She rarely, if ever, sees the radiance and grandeur of earth from a height, or in limitless expanses. Neither was she in love with the sea; in her mild admiration of it standing midway between Charles Lamb's nourished spleen, and poor Dorothy Wordsworth's rapture, who wept at her first sight of it.

As we count these walkers over, we find not one romantic visionary among them. None of them hear lullabies in the air, or haunting voices in the low wind. They never lose themselves in the shadow of a cloud upon a distant mountain, or brood with a sunbeam over the heart of a voluptuous rose. No mystic thrills and pangs are in their love of nature. Such amorous dalliance they leave to weak legs and narrow chests, to summer hammocks and heated libraries.

M. B. W.

THREE CENTURIES OF OXFORD.¹

THERE are two distinct aspects under which the University of Oxford appeals to the imagination and affection of the present generation. To the whole of educated England and to half of educated Europe she is the great western university, the home of learning and philosophy in the Dark Ages, the nursery of scholars and theologians whose fame filled her halls with thousands of enthusiastic students drawn from every nation in Christendom. Of Oxford from this point of view as she was in the days of the Plantagenets we are to expect an interesting account from Mr. Gladstone, who has promised us a lecture on the subject as soon as he has leisure to undertake it. This will be for the scholars, historians, and antiquaries of the world at large. To another and very much smaller class, the living men, whether English, Irish, or Scotch, who were at any time, or still are, members of the University, Oxford is endeared by the memory of a happy spring-time, when the pleasures of manhood were enjoyed with the carelessness of childhood, and the last cup of irresponsible gaiety was drained before they passed out into the battle of life. This class may be divided into numerous varieties. There are some who remember Oxford best for the sake of its amusements and its social life, others as the scene of academic triumphs, and the patron of studies in which they still find their chief solace; while others again are more affected by the memory of that great religious movement of which Oxford was so long the centre, and of which the echoes have not yet died away. All alike, however, look

back upon Oxford with a kind and a degree of interest inspired by no other spot and no other institution in the world. Reminiscences of Oxford can never pall upon them; book after book and essay after essay may continue to be written on the subject through the coming years without the authors ever having to complain of a dearth of readers or a decline of sympathy.

The volume just published by the Oxford Historical Society should therefore command a wide welcome. It begins with the reminiscences of Sir Thomas Bodley, who matriculated in 1559, and ends with those of the present Lord Brabourne, who took his degree in 1851. It does not profess to present us with any original matter, the book being merely a collection of passages selected from the writings of Oxford men relating to their university careers; but as bringing together within a small compass the experience of so large a number of competent witnesses differing so widely from each other in opinions, characters, and tastes, and covering the whole period from the end of the Reformation in the sixteenth century to the beginning of the great change which has so materially affected the University of Oxford in the nineteenth, the book has a value of its own quite apart from the elements of interest to which we have already referred. It enables us to take a bird's eye view of Oxford life for more than three centuries, and by comparing one account with another to give a tolerably good guess at what it was really like. It is a pity that the editor has not incorporated some of Dr. Johnson's reminiscences, and also Lord Eldon's, which would have made the picture more complete. But they are pretty

¹ *Reminiscences of Oxford, 1559—1850.* Printed for the Oxford Historical Society, 1892.

generally known, and can easily be drawn upon in supplement of the material here before us.

In the few remarks which we propose to offer on the subject we shall confine ourselves for the most part to the period succeeding the Revolution, by which time Oxford had entirely lost her mediæval character, and had entered on what is usually considered the least creditable stage of her history. It is hardly perhaps sufficiently recognised that this was not altogether the fault of the authorities. When Oxford was at the height of her reputation as a mediæval university, nobody dreamed of going there except for purposes of study. Students of all ages and countries flocked of their own accord to her famous lecture-rooms, inspired by literary curiosity, and not sent there for the sake of education or discipline. Such, we mean, was the general character of the place; and it is one which many ardent reformers of the present age have been anxious to revive. They have not liked to see in Oxford only a kind of upper public school. But the changes they regret were brought about by causes which it would have been very difficult to counteract. It is necessary only to name the invention of printing which, by reducing the value of oral teaching, naturally diminished the number of students who came to Oxford from abroad or from the remote parts of Great Britain to listen to the famous teachers. But it seems to us that the transformation of Oxford University from its mediæval to its modern form was only one part of the great social, religious, and political revolution which began with the Tudors. In the first place, with the cessation of the Wars of the Roses, and the diminution of the baronial households, a change gradually took place in the education of the English aristocracy. For a long time the old idea survived that the profession of arms was the only one becoming a gentleman who did not care to be a priest. But though the idea survived,

the practice founded on it naturally began to die out when war ceased to be the almost constant occupation of the governing class. With the termination of the French and Scotch wars, and the conclusion of the struggle between the Houses of York and Lancaster, the sword was sheathed in England, and the old schools in which young gentlemen had been trained to arms, already greatly thinned in numbers by the bloodshed of the fifteenth century, ceased to be in request, either among the survivors of the feudal oligarchy, or the new gentry and nobility which rose upon its ruins. For the baronial castle and the tilt-yard some substitute must be found, and it was naturally found in the universities. The old system did not indeed die out at once. Scott describes it as still practised in Scotland in the sixteenth century; and a hundred years afterwards we find Julian Peveril sent, when still a boy, to be trained in the household of the Countess of Derby. But these were exceptional cases. As a general rule the college had succeeded to the castle. A classical education instead of a military education now became the hall-mark of a gentleman; and the younger members of the aristocracy, who would at one time have been trained at Raby, Alnwick, or Warwick, now went up to Merton, Christ Church, or Brazenose, and carried their manners with them.

Men of birth and wealth who sent their sons to Oxford could no more compel them to be industrious, or prevent them from being extravagant, than they can now. The majority of these young men would care very little for reading, and it is easy to see what effect upon collegiate and university life would be gradually produced by the influx of a class so utterly unlike the students of the olden time, and strangers to the traditions of learning.

This was the social change. A wealthier class of undergraduates, caring only to walk through the university to please their parents and

guardians, and with no intellectual interests in the studies of the place, had largely superseded the old class of poor scholars who had hung on the lips of men of letters, and whose only ambition was to excel in literature or philosophy. The college tutors did not then, any more than they do now, care to play the part of schoolmasters. The richer class of undergraduates did not in those days care much for degrees; and thus Oxford came to be regarded as a place which it was good for young men to visit; where they might study hard if they pleased, or carry away, perhaps, some aroma of literature if they did not; but where they were not to be compelled to learn lessons as at Eton or Westminster. There is evidence in this volume that the college authorities were not oblivious of their duties; but they seem to have thought that little could be done without the assistance of the parents. Stephen Penton, who had once been a Fellow of New College, and was Principal of St. Edmund Hall from 1675 to 1683, has left us an account of his taking his son to Oxford many years after he had quitted it himself, and of the interview which he had with the lad's tutor. It is too long to quote, but if the reader will refer to it, he will find that it bears out what is here said, and that tutors anxious to do their duty had to struggle, as they have still, against difficulties created by indulgent or inconsiderate parents.

Two other causes must be briefly glanced at in our explanation of the change which came over the University of Oxford between the reign of Mary and the reign of Anne. The Reformation divided Oxford into religious parties. The Civil War made her a political partisan. Two new interests were thus created; two new passions were kindled within the University which it would be only natural to conclude must have interfered with that exclusive devotion to learning which had prevailed during her earlier days. When Oxford became a centre of poli-

tical and religious agitation literature had only half her love. She looked to strengthening the views which she herself entertained by connecting herself as closely as possible with the aristocracy which shared them; and thus in time she began to acquire a kind of lay character, if we may call it so, very different from, and in some respects inconsistent with, the function of a purely learned institution. Thus it is easy to understand that when literature and philosophy ceased in the eyes of the University rulers to be the goal of university existence they should gradually have allowed the old discipline to be relaxed, and have ceased to enforce the scholastic observances of the place with as much strictness as formerly.

But it is a mistake to suppose that this laxity was what many people suppose it to have been who found their ideas upon the reports of Gibbon and Lord Eldon. One of the most interesting chapters in the volume is the vindication of Magdalen College from the aspersions cast on it by Gibbon. It was written about the year 1800 by the Rev. James Hurdis, Fellow of Magdalen and Professor of Poetry; and the author points out, what is undeniably true, that the impressions of a boy of fifteen who did not reside in college more than six months altogether are to be received with considerable distrust, even in the absence of countervailing evidence. But as a matter of fact he convicts Gibbon of several inaccuracies in regard to the college system, which prove that he could have taken very little pains to ascertain what was really going on in his own. Gibbon says that the Latin declamations in the hall had become a mere tradition, while Mr. Hurdis assures us that it had never been dropped, and that in his own time every man of three years' standing was required to take it in turns immediately after dinner before the whole hall, and that gentlemen commoners enjoyed no exemption from it. They seem, from Lord Brabourne's

article, to have fancied even in his time that they enjoyed exemptions which they really did not; and Gibbon may have been easily misled by the talk to which he listened at their table. These declamations were certainly kept up in 1690, as Johnson tells an interesting story relating to them in his *Life of Yalden*.

Gibbon also asserted that there were no public examinations in Magdalen College, that is to say, we suppose, what are now called "collections," an examination at the end of every term before the Head of the college, the Dean, the Tutors and any other Fellows who choose to attend. These, says Mr. Hurdis, were regularly held at Magdalen, and no undergraduate in Gibbon's time would have been allowed to go down unless he had acquitted himself creditably. He gives us a long list of the subjects which the men of different years were required to take up; and if the examination was real and not a farce, nothing more could have been desired. But that is just the question. Forty years ago men could scrape through collections even at a strict college with a very moderate amount of knowledge, and a hundred and forty years ago in a college that was not strict, possibly with next to none. We do not of course say that this was the case at Magdalen; and at all events Gibbon is evidently wrong in saying that there were no terminal examinations there.

Gibbon again makes no mention of college lectures given to classes of undergraduates, though such lectures were given then as now. Johnson tells us of the lecture in hall at Pembroke, where he sat as far as he could from one of the scholars that he might not hear him construe, as he "could not bear his superiority;" and his friend Taylor used to keep notes for him of Mr. Bateman's lectures at Christ Church. But Gibbon seems to have read only with his own special tutor Dr. Waldegrave. The truth was that Gibbon went up to the University, as he himself admits, in a wretched

state of preparation. He was probably too backward to be placed in any class; and in the summer term of 1752 Dr. Waldegrave read three or four plays of Terence with him. As he was with him only an hour a day this was not bad work; and that the lecture was confined to "a dry and literal interpretation of the text" was probably due to the fact that Gibbon required to be well grounded in the Latin syntax. An Oxford tutor in Charles the Second's time, to whom we have already referred, complained that boys were sent up to Oxford so poorly "furnished with Latin" that they could not profit by the studies of the place. Gibbon would have liked to hear a dissertation on the ancient and modern theatre; but his tutor would have been guilty of a great neglect of duty had he thrown his lecture into any such form as that.

Where Gibbon has more truth upon his side is in what he says of the discipline of the college. Hurdis asks what could Gibbon be expected to know about Oxford when he spent half the term at London or Bath, as, according to his own account, he did. But Hurdis takes no notice of a system of college government under which such absences were possible. "My growing debts," says Gibbon "might be secret, but my frequent absence was visible and scandalous." Mr. Hurdis asserts that in a large college the absence of an individual might not have been perceived; but it assuredly ought to have been. It is idle now at all events to attempt to defend a system under which an undergraduate could absent himself from college without the knowledge of the authorities, and return, and go away again at pleasure. It is clear, too, that attendance at lecture was not properly enforced. Gibbon says that his tutor would accept any kind of excuse; and we must all remember Johnson's being sent for by his tutor, Mr. Jorden, when he had been sliding in Christ Church meadows instead of going to his logic lecture. He went with a beating heart and expected a

severe rebuke, but the tutor only asked him to wine. It is true indeed that this story cuts both ways, for if it had been customary to allow men to shirk lectures without any notice being taken of it, why should Johnson have been afraid? After all, we must be cautious of drawing general conclusions from stray anecdotes of this kind. In another version of the same story Johnson says he had stayed away four times running at his own college. But the present writer remembers very well that a man once shirked the divinity lecture for several weeks without anything being said to him on the subject till the end of term, and this in a college where divinity was held of special importance. Yet this was no proof of any general laxity of discipline either in the College or the University.

That Oxford was not the castle of indolence which those who know it only from the imperfect and prejudiced reports of one great man and the *obiter dictum* of another have been tempted to believe, is, we think, pretty certain. Gibbon says that the professors at Oxford had long since ceased to dream of giving lectures. Hurdis says that out of the twenty professors at Oxford fifteen gave lectures regularly. Though Hurdis must have been Gibbon's junior, he was so nearly his contemporary as to have known well enough what Oxford was like in 1754; and we may receive his corrections of the great historian's reminiscences without any hesitation. But this is not all. College "exercises," as they were called, filled a much more important place in the educational system of Oxford a hundred and fifty years ago than they have done latterly, and were talked about in the University just as prizes and scholarships are now. It was the fame which Addison acquired by his Latin verses while at Queen's that gained him the notice of Dr. Hough, the famous President of Magdalen, and a demyship at that college in 1689. Johnson's own translation of Pope's *Messiah* was handed about in the common-rooms and kept him "high in the estimation of

the whole University;" and Johnson himself in his *Lives of the Poets* often refers to these compositions in a tone which seems to show that they were the road to university as well as to collegiate distinction. There was then of course no class-list, and the examination for the Bachelor's degree was a mere nothing. But literary emulation seems to have been kept alive, and classical scholarship encouraged by these college performances, some of which, to be found in the *Musæ Anglicanæ*, possess uncommon merit. The *Carmina Quadragesimalia*, written by the students of Christ Church, were tasks of the same character; and in a collection belonging to the present writer bearing date about the middle of the century, there are pieces displaying such wit, vigour, and command of Latinity as to place them much above the level of ordinary modern Latin verse. The declamations were in prose; and these various "exercises" were the Hertfords and Irelands and Chancellor's prizes of modern days. They made a university reputation; and a university reputation in those days was something worth having.

Men upon the whole were probably left more to themselves; and more was expected from them in the way of private reading then than now. Even so late as the reign of George the Third, and in spite of the hostile influences to which we have referred, the tradition still lingered that all men who came up to the university came up with the intention of reading. "It is presumed," says Mr. Hurdis, "that when young men appear in an English University, they are in the habit of application, and are old enough to continue their studies without compulsion, actuated by a knowledge of the expediency of research, and a desire to comply with the wishes of their friends." Many distinguished men were opposed to the introduction of the competitive system in 1801, thinking it calculated to check independent study and to prejudice the cause of learning, however much it might benefit

education. But as with our parliamentary system so with our university system, its practical anomalies became too great for public opinion to tolerate. Mr. Gladstone has been one of the first to acknowledge how much was lost by the Reform Bill of 1832; and similarly we may be pretty confident that a change which was mistrusted by men like Gaisford and Coplestone was not all for good, and that learning and scholarship flourished under the old system more than has been generally supposed.

Into the social life of Oxford during the last two centuries we are afforded many interesting glimpses in the volume now before us. In many respects, as may naturally be supposed, life at the university was the same as life outside of it. The bowling-green and racket-court were popular institutions, and boating, cricket, and billiards had each its votaries, though not to the same absorbing extent as at the present day. Fishing, too, is mentioned by Jeremy Bentham as one of the pursuits in which men sought "relief from the weary monotony of existence." But we should think poor Jeremy had the weary monotony of existence all to himself. Coffee-houses were as fashionable in Oxford as in London. The first coffee-house in Oxford was *The Angel*, presumably on the site of the old Angel Inn, well remembered by Oxford men. Others, later on, were *Tom's* opposite the present market-place; *Horsman's*, which seems to have been somewhere near Oriel Lane; *Bagg's* opposite *The King's Arms* in Holywell, and two or three more, each of which was patronised by particular colleges. These houses were frequented by dons and undergraduates alike, and they were the usual resort of both after the early dinners in hall, though the young men had frequently paid a preliminary visit to the tavern or ale-house first.

Throughout these Reminiscences we find frequent mention of undergraduates frequenting "public-houses,"

by which sometimes ordinary ale-houses seem to be meant, and sometimes inns like *The Mitre* or *The Old Cross*. The proctor told Mr. Penton about the end of the seventeenth century that it was impossible to keep young men away from them altogether; and Johnson reminded his old college-friend Edwards of "their drinking together at an ale-house near Pembroke Gate." In the writer's own time the practice was not entirely discontinued. There was a public-house in Bear Lane to which men used to go, and in *Tom Brown at Oxford*, Mr. Hughes introduces us to undergraduates at *The Choughs*, which was just an ordinary ale-house. *The Tun* was the most celebrated tavern in Oxford in the reign of George the First; and thirty years ago several inns at Oxford drove a roaring trade with undergraduates. *The Cross* in the Corn-Market was a very favourite resort for dinners; and a well-known member of the late House of Commons, then a gentleman-commoner at Oxford, was very fond of playing the Amphitryon at this select tavern. *The Mitre*, *The Maidenhead* and *The Wheatsheaf* were also much frequented; and who can forget the Miss Lipscombs and the spatchcocked eels at Godstow?

In Heber's Reminiscences we find the first mention made of hunting. On returning to the University in 1818 he writes to a friend that he finds it much altered for the better, and the manners and the morals of the undergraduates much improved; adding however that men hunt a good deal more than they used to do. In *Reginald Dalton*, supposed to be a picture of the University in Lockhart's own time, a few years earlier than the date of Heber's letter, hunting is a prominent feature. As to the improvement in university manners; if men were more temperate and steady in any marked degree in 1818 than they were fifteen years earlier, we wonder what they were like when *Palestine* was written. We must

suppose that was about the time when Tom Thorpe was at Oxford, and, in assuring Miss Catherine Morland that there was no drinking at Oxford then, this hero informs her that it was rare to find a man exceed his four pints. As this at all events must mean his two bottles, and as this is represented as the daily allowance of an undergraduate, it must be admitted that there was room for improvement.

It must, however, have been gradual. There can be no doubt that long after the latest of the dates here mentioned, a great deal of wine continued to be drunk at Oxford, both in college common-rooms and at undergraduate wine-parties. So long as it continued to be done out of Oxford, it continued to be done in Oxford. The change was only just beginning when these *Reminiscences* conclude; and Lord Brabourne (1847—1851) bears witness to the quantity of "fiery port, strong sherry, and full-bodied claret which went down the throats of thirsty undergraduates" in his time. This was at Magdalen, and it would be quite in harmony with the fitness of things that these convivial habits should have lingered last among the groves and cloisters still haunted by the memory of Addison:—

*Extrema per illos
Iside discedens Bacchus vestigia fecit.*

What must have made a great difference in the life of Oxford in the last century was the number of men who continued to reside there after they had taken their degrees, constituting a kind of society wholly unknown in later times. Down to the middle of the present century indeed, and still later, the old-fashioned Fellow, whose college was his home, and who spent his life within its walls, was not unknown. But a hundred and fifty years ago, men of much the same stamp were to be found among the resident Masters and Bachelors who were not Fellows. These, if they did not stay at Oxford all their lives, stayed often for a good

many years, and helped to give a character to the University, somewhat different from what we are accustomed to ourselves. Now Oxford is one gigantic school, composed entirely of pupils and teachers. Then the interests of the undergraduate were not the all in all which they are now. They were not looked after, drilled, disciplined, and examined after the present fashion; a system regarded with equal disfavour both by the Conservative who sighs for repose, and the advanced Liberal who sighs for higher standards of learning. Mark Pattison was as strongly opposed to it as Gaisford himself. In the eighteenth century the University, though in a very degenerate and decaying form, really was in theory what the reformers of twenty years ago desired to make her, a place in which grown men were to pursue independent research. Her libraries supplied facilities not then to be found elsewhere, and though it may sometimes be difficult to distinguish between cloistered indolence and learned leisure we have no reason to doubt that the Oxford of the eighteenth century produced both.

Mr. Oakley, who matriculated at Oxford in the year 1820, refers also to that supposed improvement in the manners and morals of the University during the first twenty years of the century which Heber believed to be a fact. We are however again forcibly reminded by Oakley's reminiscences of the danger of trusting too much to individual impressions with regard to the state of old-fashioned Oxford. Oakley himself admits as much and quotes against himself the description of the society at Corpus, given by Sir John Taylor Coleridge, as it was from 1807—1810, when he was a scholar of that college. Coleridge drew a most interesting and attractive picture of a small knot of men, "living constantly with one another and finding their daily interest in literary pursuits, rational converse, and harmless recreation." Oakley's experience of

Christ Church a few years afterwards was exactly the reverse of this. So, too, as a set-off against the unfavourable accounts of Oxford in the preceding century, we have Bishop Lowth's reminiscences, who says:—"I spent many years in that illustrious society, in a well-regulated course of discipline and studies, and in the agreeable and improving commerce of gentlemen and of scholars; in a society where emulation without envy, ambition without jealousy, contention without animosity incited industry and awakened genius; where a liberal pursuit of knowledge, and a genuine freedom of thought, was raised, encouraged, and pushed forward by example, by commendation, and by authority."

Shelley is another great man who has given the University a bad name. And the long extracts from Hogg's *Life of Shelley* set before us in this volume teem with accusations which are however quite inconsistent with the writer's own statements elsewhere. He inveighs harshly against the ignorance, the indolence, and the total neglect of their duties by the university and college authorities. Shelley complains that the tutors offered him no assistance. Yet for the matter of ignorance we have the following remarkable testimony to the learning still preserved at Oxford, and the painstaking accuracy with which it was taught at University College.

Shelley took the scholastic logic very kindly, seized its distinctions with his accustomed quickness, felt a keen interest in the study, and patiently endured the exposition of those minute discriminations, which the tyro is apt to condemn as vain and trifling. It should seem that the ancient method of communicating the art of syllogising has been preserved, in part at least, by tradition in this University. I have sometimes met with learned foreigners, who understood the end and object of scholastic logic, having received the traditional instruction in some of the old universities on the Continent; but I have never found even one of my countrymen, except Oxonians, who rightly comprehended the nature of the science; I may, perhaps, add, that in proportion as the self-taught

logicians had laboured in the pursuit, they had gone far astray. It is possible, nevertheless, that those who have drunk at the fountain head, and have read the *Organon* of Aristotle in the original, may have attained to a just comprehension by their unassisted energies; but in this age, and in this country, I apprehend the number of such adventurous readers is very inconsiderable.

It is clear from this that good logic lectures, at all events, were given in University College, and as for general neglect, Shelley's tutor sent for him and told him what books to read. What Shelley wanted, we do not well know, and he probably did not know himself. The honour-schools had then been established, and there was plenty of encouragement in Oxford, both for scholarship, ethics, and metaphysics, for those who chose to profit by it.

However, we turn now to the pleasanter side of Shelley's university career. He was extremely fond of Latin verses, a taste which he had acquired at Eton, and wrote them with great facility, and he was also much addicted to long country walks in the neighbourhood, being one of the very few Oxford men who have appreciated the great charm of much of the surrounding scenery. He also disliked dining in hall, and nothing pleased him better than a pedestrian excursion lasting from two or three o'clock in the afternoon till nine or ten in the evening. We only know that he was fond of Shotover; but he must have extended his peregrinations far beyond Shotover, if he walked for five or six hours. Matthew Arnold has shown us how well acquainted he was with the Berkshire side of Oxford, and in *Thyrsis* and the *Scholar-Gipsy* he has immortalised its scenery. But few Oxonians seem to be aware of the very pretty country which lies on the other side, if you pass out of Oxford over Magdalen Bridge, and either keep up Headington Hill, or turn to the left to Elsfield, and so on to Stow Wood. As you approach the Chiltern Hills and the Buckinghamshire beech-woods, the scenery becomes almost

picturesque. In Shelley's own words, "It has no pretension to peculiar beauty, but it is quiet and pleasant and rural, and purely agricultural after the good old fashion." A drive or ride, however, from Oxford to Brill, past Studley and Horton and Bearstall Tower, or by Thame and Chiselhampton to Chalgrove Field, will lead us through scenery which deserves higher praise than this. Only one of the contributors seems to have explored the many pretty little nooks and corners lying in the direction we have indicated, and which we should like to believe that Shelley had explored

before him. As the articles from which the three last chapters are taken have appeared in contemporary periodical literature quite recently, we feel precluded from quoting passages either from Mr. Bedford's or Mr. Kebbel's, or Lord Brabourne's reminiscences. But they will all repay perusal, and the half comic, half plaintive regrets of the second of them will find an echo in the bosoms of many elderly gentlemen who may possibly remember the bean-fields between Stow Wood and Headington, and "Windy Davis," and the shooting at Ensham, as well as he does.

SOME NEW ENGLAND ARCHITECTURE.

CASTLE and manor-house, cathedral, abbey, and ancient parish church, scattered broadly over this island of mist and sunshine, tell to all who can read their time-worn characters the story of the genius, the valour, and the cruelty, the repentance, and the strong spiritual aspiration of our northern race. The story of the Anglo-American Republic is much the same only not so long, but her conquests are chiefly recorded in books. Her battles with red men and red coats, with her near neighbours and with herself, have raised no lofty border fortresses. Her conflicts with the "wingy subtleties of divinity," witchcraft, Quakers, and Calvinism, have left but little mark on the visible landscape. Her castles are the castles of her "Bag Barons;" her cathedrals are mostly new; her mediævalism is recent and in a large measure alien.

Yet it would be a mistake to suppose that the physiognomy of New England, under which name I shall take the liberty to include New York and others of the neighbouring North Atlantic States, differs very greatly from that of the Mother Island. Differences of course there are, especially in architecture; but the general resemblance of the face of town and country in this part of the Union to the same features in England, has been often remarked. It is, indeed, because of this very absence of strong contrast that the tract of older civilisation lying east of the Alleghanies is so often ignored by Englishmen. And yet this tract of early civilisation which is so like England as to be of no interest to the British traveller, illustrates nearly every phase of American architecture since the Revolution. Of course the first

colonial specimens have disappeared along with the aboriginal wigwam,—the settler's log-cabin, the Puritan's log meeting-house, and those more aristocratic mansions of which the "faire greene house in New England" of Sir William Phipps may have been a type. But many of the buildings of the last hundred years still remain. "The Americans came originally," says Matthew Arnold, "from that great class in English society among whom the sense for conduct and business is much more strongly developed than the sense for beauty." This was fortunate for the Republic; for, however admirable a perfect balance of powers may be, in founding states one needs a sense for conduct and business more than a sense for beauty. Yet how much of beauty there is in this "old New England"! Nature has done so much for her; and even amid the areas of undeniable ugliness, which in her commercial and manufacturing towns the American's accentuated sense for business at least has produced, how many refreshing pictures one finds! From the old wooden Greek-porticoed churches of rural New England, and the quaint "gambrel-roofed" houses of such towns as Salem, Concord, and Cambridge,—under whose branching elms Hawthorne the dreamer, Emerson the cheerful and wise, and Longfellow, the poet beloved of two nations, lived, wrote, and sang—to the modern Romish and Anglican cathedrals, and the modern domiciles and suburban settlements entitled of Elizabeth and Queen Anne, the range is too wide for me to do more than touch upon a few examples. I regret that I cannot draw from actual view one of those picturesque New England houses of the seven-

teenth century, which Hawthorne, perhaps from his own imagination, has minutely described. With a chimney so vast that the witches could always have easy and commodious exit, and a "clustering community of wooden gables, the second storey of each, with its lattice windows, projecting over the front," their massive timber frames "were like the skeleton of some old giant," and almost as indestructible as brick and mortar. The lineal descendants of these leviathans, however, seem to be certain old farm and village houses in Massachusetts and other of the strictly New England States. Desolate, weather-beaten, gray and bleached by a century perhaps of wind and rain, we still find them on the bleak country hill-sides, in the older half-deserted villages (peopled chiefly by octogenarians whose children have "gone West" and to the larger towns, or else by foreigners), and on the lonely sand-dunes of sea-shore,—sad, lingering ghosts of once living homes. These houses, always suggestive of wrecks, drowned ship-captains, and the long unwritten tragedy of New England sea-faring life, are for the most part (except of course their enormous chimneys) entirely of wood. The large "gambrel," or curb, roofs, with their dormer windows, are covered with unpainted shingles, warped and curled by the sun, as in many cases the lower storeys are also, though the usual sheathing of this part is the horizontal, over-lapping "clapboard," which is the distinctive feature of even the modern American house. Nevertheless they are not so unlike many old English houses as might be supposed. At a distance the pine and hemlock shingles can hardly be distinguished from the gray slates in common use here, especially when mouldy or moss-covered. The great charm of a red-tiled roof is the warm and variegated tones it takes with age; the shingle roof bleaches to one dull colour. This old colonial type, however, has, at its best, several

intrinsic merits. It belongs to the landscape by a sort of prescriptive right: it is indigenous, and forms a connecting link between the old New England life and the present; and it is satisfactory to know that its characteristics are likely to be perpetuated in many modern structures on nearly the same lines.

Of a different order of traditions is the old farm and wayside house of New York and New Jersey. Hawthorne, shy, sombre, and meditative, the "hereditary Puritan" tingeing all his fancies and guiding his pen, is the presiding genius of the ancient, witch-haunted, New England house; Washington Irving, mirthful and mischievous, is the guardian spirit of these Dutch mansions, which are also in a peculiar manner associated with the Revolution and General Washington. More than one of them served as his headquarters at different times during the war, and have since been turned into repositories of its relics; tarnished epaulets, heavy muskets and swords, with now and then a Hessian boot of elephantine proportions. Unlike the old New England houses, they are of stone, rough or smooth, and sometimes white-washed, and hence have worn well. The roofs and gables, however, are of wood, and the eaves, projecting broadly on each side, are supported by posts and form wide verandas. These picturesque half-stone houses abound on the old high roads between New York and Philadelphia, over which British and Continental armies, one or the other in hot pursuit, have more than once marched; and in the beautiful mountain and forest tract extending from the highlands of the Hudson across northern New Jersey to the Delaware river. Dim, soldierly figures in three-cornered hats and red or homespun coats haunt them,—the "mad" Anthony Wayne, Lee the renegade, Arnold the traitor, André the unfortunate; and pictures rise in the imagination,—the tall commanding Father of his Country (not the Sphinx of common portraiture,

but the man), silently pacing the ground before his headquarters at Morristown, amid snow-clad hills, with the clear-glowing skies of the American winter over his head ; or the British Commander, weary of his unprofitable task, asleep in the summer sunshine by the door of a wayside farm-house, after the dinner reluctantly cooked for him in a rebel's oven. With these associations the old New York and New Jersey houses, like those of New England, are of indigenous growth, and it is to be regretted that they also have not been thought worthy of further architectural development.

I have dwelt at some length on these two revolutionary specimens, partly because they are the earliest of the kind that I have yet seen, and partly because they seem to me the best of what may be looked upon as native types. It is true that in point of charm they do not approach the delightful old gables and half-timbered fronts of the English cathedral and other provincial towns ; but like them they are free from the pretentious faults characteristic of so much modern architecture in both countries. I have said that I shall not attempt to speak of all the styles produced in the half-century or more preceding the Renaissance of about fifteen years ago ; a few marked types, however, occur to me.

At some period in the not very remote past, the more prosperous New England farmer, who was often a Member of Congress and a Justice of the Peace, forsook the low ceilings of the comparatively small house of his fathers for larger and loftier mansions. I do not mean for Heaven, but for that style of white house with green blinds which widely prevailed and yet prevails. It has the usual gable roof covered with pine shingles, and the front is often adorned with classical ornaments neatly carved in wood. This solemn but eminently respectable house, which has its share of the brighter associations belonging to New England life, from its size and striking

colour, or want of colour, still forms a prominent feature of the country landscape. Both in town and country, however, this white-and-green fashion seems to have been almost universal about fifty years ago, and in combination with foliage the effect is even now far from unpleasing. The large square "cupola" house, of a later date, modelled more or less on the Italian villa, and common in the larger towns and their suburbs, was often white also, though not infrequently of a light cream colour. Its nearly flat roof was rendered possible by the use of tin, solder, and paint, instead of wooden shingles ; and many examples of the style have yet a pleasing air of spacious comfort and old-fashioned respectability. Usually the homes of men prospering in the professions or in business, the surmounting ornament seems to have been a symbol of success in life in the West as well as in the East ; the conclusive comment, it may be remembered, of a certain Californian gold-seeker on the good fortune of his partner was, "That 'cupilo' mansion is his'n." Another early type, in which an attempt was made at more elaborate ornamentation, was the Gothic cottage. With a roof rising at an angle of incredible sharpness, and eaves and gables carved into curious little scollops and figures, this style had a light and cheerful effect which in its day was novel and pleasing. It was also painted in colours, and will ever be remembered with affection from being associated with pretty gardens, ornamental trees, and carefully kept shrubbery. Of course these are but a few types which stand out somewhat definitely from a confusing aggregate of individual creations, in regard to most of which the trite remark that they are "of no particular order of architecture but their own," might be varied by saying that they are not even that. To be of a distinct order, however, is not the first requisite in a house, for the pleasant "domestic" quality can exist without it. The stately old stone mansions still to be

seen in the towns which were originally Dutch, with wooden balustrades along the roofs, and carved doorways suggestive of the courtly hospitality of colonial days, though hardly constituting an order are eminently domestic. So too are the old-fashioned wooden houses like that of which Longfellow sings in his *Old Clock on the Stairs*, which abound in the pleasanter and more prosperous New England villages. Nor is the quality altogether absent in the large white houses common in the towns of New York and New Jersey, with long wooden columns in front supporting the projecting roof, or in the almost endless modifications of the Italian villa and the few remaining domiciles with the "corbie step" gable imported from the Netherlands. These all have "domesticity" at least; but this cannot be said of the modern castellated villa with its frowning battlements, which was even a worse anachronism in America than here. That absurdity, however, was not often committed in the United States; and indeed in the greater part of the tentative performance up to the Civil War, there seems to have been a steady if not always intelligent effort after beauty and fitness.

The American architect laboured under many disadvantages. He did not have constantly before his eyes, like his European brother, a large variety of more or less approved models. His material was mostly wood, pine timbers and "clapboards," which were yearly growing more and more unsubstantial under the parings of economical machinery. His task was that of translating into light wood forms and ornaments which were originally in stone, or of inventing new forms. He often blundered, no doubt, but he did not as a rule lose his sanity or perpetrate monstrosity. After the war he did both. It was during the sudden expansion of the Northern towns and villages in the prosperous years immediately following the great struggle that the ordinary American architect and the

American carpenter together lost their wits and their morals. The results of this double catastrophe are still visible. Gower Street has been said to express the English architect's "inability to express anything at all"; the suburbs of many Trans-Atlantic towns chiefly express the American architect's inability to combine art with a paramount desire for quick returns on invested capital. It is needless to describe the creations of this speculative era; the long, dismal rows of suburban boxes in the newer streets, helplessly facing each other in the common ignominy of sordid origin, and often in melancholy dilapidation from the bankruptcy of their owners. Besides these regions of comparative gentility, there was a corresponding growth of cheap wooden tenements, those flimsy tracts of pine-wood and plaster, whose frequent and sudden effacement by the besom of fire grimly reconciles the American of taste to the recurrence of that periodical calamity. But this interval of abortive effort had its use. The "Mansard" roofs, flat roofs, and "shed" roofs of this period, and the large country houses of the newly rich, with their grounds often full of cast-iron dogs, deer, and classical nudities, served by way of contrast, as an admirable prelude to the "Elizabethan" and "Queen Anne" renaissance. I am aware that many faults are now alleged against the particular combinations of chimneys and gables which we are accustomed to call by these names. A well-known American writer on the subject says that they are not, after all, adapted to the climatic conditions of the United States. They are expensive; indulgence in a more than usually ornate edifice of the kind has more than once led to bankruptcy and a precipitate flight to Canada on the part of its owner. They are also intolerably hot: they are apt to leak; and under the hands of rash and uninspired artists they become trivial, flippant, pert. All this may in a measure be true, but with their

appearance (which by a kind foresight of nature was coincident with that of Mr. Du Maurier) a cheerfuller sun rose in the American heavens. Postlethwaite and Young Maudle, peacock's feathers, sunflowers, and singular bonnets will for ever live in the grateful memory of many youthful Americans, happily associated with those delightful, and then novel, architectural forms. The student of Mr. Ruskin and Wordsworth awoke one morning to find his neighbour's barn painted green, his neighbour's house grown into points and pinnacles, and his neighbour's children fearfully and wonderfully clothed. It would, of course, be extravagant to say,

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven ;

yet it cannot be denied that both in England and America, to the younger generation at least, life at that time became singularly and exceptionally pleasant. To the American the "Queen Anne" revival was more than merely pleasant ; it was a restoration, no doubt very imperfect, of the earlier architectural environment of his race. The "Queen Anne" hamlets about New York and other Eastern cities, except that they are apt to be more exuberantly grotesque, do not differ greatly from those in and about London, although, as I have said, they are more largely composed of wood, which permits them to be painted a greater variety of colours. They have the same red roofs and chimneys, the same freaks of gable and window, and the same tennis-courts enlivened by cheerful young people in white flannel suits. One especially pleasant feature they possess ; the lawns are not usually divided by walls but are left unenclosed, making wide sheets of vivid greenness, refreshing to the eye and to the mind. But while the æsthetic experiment in England is mainly a modernisation of earlier forms still surviving, America had no such prototypes. The Englishman has always had pictures of the Elizabethan world

close to his hand ; the American had them only in books. Hence the new order with its fantastic gables and palpably false timber fronts, was, as I said, a sort of restoration of his early architectural environment. To make the illusion perfect some effort of the imagination was of course necessary, but with a little of the "mental squint" which Lewis Carroll recommends, he could make pleasant little pictures for himself, of the Tabard Inn, for instance, and the Canterbury Pilgrims, or of the Boar's Head at Eastcheap, with Nym, Bardolph, and ancient Pistol at the door.

The "Queen Anne" renaissance was also a revelation to many of the possibilities for beauty latent in the American village. The landscape had always seemed to invite some such experiment. Of the salient points of difference between English and American scenery so much has been said that more seems superfluous. America has the Italian skies, not at all times, but in ordinarily clear weather. She has not the admirable foreground of England, nor the famous English "middle distance ;" but by way of compensation she has the marvellous colours, the clear blue, purple, and crimson, which her magical and transparent atmosphere gives to the distant horizon. As a pleasant relief to her somewhat barren foreground came the new and picturesque order. The hills and valleys in the neighbourhood of the large commercial cities received the stranger kindly, and little communities of parti-coloured roofs and gables sprang up as if by magic on the many railways centring in them. They have been pronounced by an eminent English critic, "not beautiful," but only "pretty and coquettish ;" but if the criticism were admitted (which it need not be, for beautiful many of them are), one might reply that very few towns in England which have been built to order like Tadmor in the wilderness, ever succeeded in being anything more.

It is Mr. Lowell, I think, who says

that the true secret of good writing is "to know what to leave in the inkpot." In a sketch of this kind, even though limited to the north-eastern corner of the Union, one feels that many of the pleasantest pictures must necessarily be left in that receptacle. The church architecture alone of this part of the country deserves a book. The churches more than anything else have stamped on the New English landscape that marked resemblance to the Old, of which I have already spoken. The distant towns present the same features of heaven-pointing spire and square, pinnacled tower. It was mainly to the Anglican body that the Eastern States owed their first good ecclesiastical architecture. The men who wrought for it in the early years of the century had the supreme good sense to resist the growing tendency to "ignorant, reckless originality," and to import the English parish church whole and entire. It was not the way to develop an "American style"; but it furnished the inhabitants of many Puritan towns with ecclesiastical models of a more ornate pattern than any they had before possessed. The modern Puritan church (if Puritan it may be called) has more than bettered the instruction; but it is doubtful whether the first Episcopal churches have been improved upon. The skill and fidelity which mark the work of many of the earlier Anglican copyists deserve only praise. Their modest ambition seemed to be, as I said, simply to reproduce in America the mediæval church of their fathers. Some of their older work looks now as if a giant's hand had deftly scooped up an English church and churchyard, with ivy-mantled tower, spreading elms, and turf "heaved in many a mouldering heap," all perfect and intact, and, without disturbing even the "moping owl," had set it down in the suburbs of some bustling American city. St. John's at Elizabeth, New Jersey (the Elizabeth-town of the Revolu-

tion), is a good example. Not ten minutes' walk from the railway station, where, at street-level after the reckless American fashion, two important lines cross and some five hundred trains daily imperil each other and the men, women, and children of a city of thirty thousand souls, this quiet and beautiful church, with its square, pinnacled tower, its warm-toned front of decorated Gothic (whether of reddish stone or some light brick, I now forget), and its thick clustering graves and shadowing trees, is not *like* England, but *is* England. It is an exotic, an importation; and my friend, when we saw it in the glowing sunlight of a summer afternoon, said, "This is an English country church! How on earth did it get here?"

I have said that American mediævalism is recent and mostly alien. This is true of New England and of most of the States founded by Anglo-Saxons. Of course in Louisiana, California, and French Canada, although alien (in the sense of not being English), it is as old as the European settlements. The Cathedral of St. Louis, amid the stuccoed walls, tiled roofs, flowers and fountains of old New Orleans, the "adobe" buildings of the early Spanish Missions on the Pacific coast, and such examples as the quaint Bonsecours Church and the beautiful old gateway of St. Sulpice at Montreal, belong to the earlier wave of mediæval religion; and in them we have the true Latin touch. The modern mediævalism which is springing up in many of the Anglo-Puritan States, may be divided into Roman-Hibernian and Anglican. "America," it has been said, "is selling her birth-right for a mess of conglomerate pottage"; and as a part of the result, Irish Catholic cathedrals, churches, and other religious buildings dominate many towns even in New England. But whatever we may think of this readiness on the part of the Puritan Republic to forego her rights of

primogeniture (if such they were), the result has been favourable to architectural variety; and the effect of this later wave of mediæval art, it may be said almost in the learned Camden's words, has been to restore antiquity to New England and New England to antiquity.

I spoke also of the castle of the American "Bag Baron." No disrespect to that potentate was intended. America owes much to him; and as society is constituted there (the order of the Cincinnati having been forbidden early in her history), his function is invaluable. By the power of his bag, whether filled by railways, banking, trade, professional labours, or good fortune, he is enabled, although without titular distinction, to hold nearly the same place in the popular horizon that privileged and titled persons do in Europe. He rises above the dead level of Republican life, and furnishes several of those elements of interest without which the most comfortable of civilisations is dull and insipid: the elements of high life, so called, of life enclosed in park walls, sequestered, and just sufficiently mysterious to excite curiosity and a proper degree of awe in persons without the charmed circle. Of course, I do not refer to the suddenly rich who cover their lawns with cast-iron gods and quadrupeds (although they are not the only offenders), but to those who possess, and have long possessed, refinement as well as wealth; and more especially to the abused and objectionable "*un-American*" class who travel much abroad, whose children are often educated abroad, and who, to say truth, are often foreigners themselves,—German bankers, perhaps—who build in brick and stone on European models and employ skilled foreigners to care for their grounds. It is the money-baron of this class, whether American or foreign, who has adorned the remote suburbs of New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and other eastern cities with the country seats which give to the middle distance

there something at least of that rich and highly finished effect which one sees in many parts of Surrey, and who of late years has even set up his baronial towers among the outlying ranges of the Alleghany mountains.

In one of his most delightful essays, Matthew Arnold, from whom I have already quoted, described the feelings of a shopman walking through Eaton or Chatsworth as being "reminiscences of an age of gold haunting the human heart, aspirations towards a harmony of things which every-day reality denies to us," and asked whether those feelings were to be had in Pittsburgh. It was characteristic of him to compare the chief city of the American Black Country with perhaps the two most charming show-places in England; and, moreover, from what I have seen of the British shopman when undergoing the ordeal of promenade at similar places of refined interest, I have been led to think that his reminiscences are oftener of beer than of an age of gold haunting the human heart. Pittsburgh, though a city of foundries and furnaces, may have suburbs as pleasant as many of those about New York. As a matter of fact our power to appreciate beauty, especially old-world beauty, comes mainly from reading, from history, fiction and poetry; and without this education of the mind, I am disposed to think the fundamental instinct of the Anglo-Saxon everywhere is to destroy beauty rather than to admire it. With a modicum of this mental preparative, however, and some natural sensibility, he would be a dull clerk indeed who could not find abundant food for his imagination in the cathedrals and churches, many of them even now ivy-grown, and in the modern manor-houses, which have been successfully transplanted to the garden spots of the new world.

I have not attempted to describe public buildings other than ecclesiastical. In those, American taste, it is well known, is Italian rather than Gothic; and one might trace the

course of empire nearly across the continent by a series of swelling domes modelled more or less on St. Peter's at Rome, or on the Capitol at Washington. Nor have I described the country towns of the Eastern States, the distinctive feature of which, perhaps, is the wide main street shaded by double, or triple, and sometimes by quadruple, rows of lofty American elms, with branches meeting in mid-air and forming aisles like those of a Gothic church. The towns with the chief cities require separate and individual treatment. Of course, comparing the items which make up the total

architectural result both in the East and in the country at large with the same features in England, the balance must be struck very much in the Englishman's favour. But America is yet young: her work thus far has been tentative; and with the besom of conflagration a constant factor in her development, and an effectual agent for removing her blunders, when not too substantially perpetrated, her future is as rich with possibilities for architecture as for every other kind of human achievement.

A. G. HYDE.

THE WHITE WEAVER.

A LEGEND OF THE ARCTIC CIRCLE.

FIERCER than the wind of the dead, when it rises from its sleep to slay the dwellers by the North Sea—

Hark to the footsteps in the snow !

Sharper than the arrowhead, when it springs from the bow to pierce the yielding breast and the tender heart—

See, the tent curtain slowly swings !

Wilder than the cry of the starving wolf, when it descends in the night upon the sleeping child—

'Twixt fire and frost a figure comes !

Swifter than the eagle, when from the heights of snow it launches terror on the spoilers of its nest—

Rise and behold the White Weaver !

The face of the man who chanted these strange words was pale and hard. No nerve tingled in the mask-like countenance, no gleam of feeling passed along the cheek ; the deep-set eyes shone like two small fires in the eye-sockets of a statue. The rest of him was like other men,—firm, swarthy hands, lithe and active limbs, a well-knit body.

Pascal Declare did not feel comfortable, as he looked at this strange visitor to Fort God's Plenty, and listened to his wild chant. Indeed Pascal, a devout Catholic brought up in the fair parish of St. Genevieve, Quebec, was not without his doubts about this guest's humanity. Then, besides, he was in love, his wedding-day was near, and in the circumstances his brain was keenly sensitive to impressions out of the ordinary. He was a handsome, intrepid fellow, despite the strain of superstition in him. But this strain was there, and it made him now turn nervously to his three companions, as if to gratify his sight with something human and natural. And the men whom he thus saw were both human and

natural. They were indeed men among men ; among men, we say, though there are those who maintain that the heathen are not quite men ; that the many tribes of this icy half of the continent of America, among whom these three were, are but discoloured fragments out of the quarries of the gods from which the Caucasian was made. However that may be, these heathens are the only immediate objects for comparison with John, David, and Teddie Graham ; for they, with Pascal Declare, are the only white men in a district five times as large as Great Britain and Ireland and a thousand times less accessible. Upon Fort God's Plenty flies a flag bearing the letters H.B.C.,—the sign of the Hudson's Bay Company ; that Honourable Company of Adventurers to whom Charles of England gave a territory of great but then unknown quantity. That was over two hundred years ago, and Charles is dead and the Company of Adventurers are dead, and all who lived then are,—No ! Let us leave that sentence uncompleted now, and when this tale is told the reader shall finish it.

These three brothers had come from Scotland to take positions in the Company's service at different times during twenty years. They had served at separate posts, but by a happy conjunction of circumstances were at last settled together at Fort God's Plenty, John the eldest being now a Chief Factor, and David and Teddie clerks of different grades, though David expected soon to be a Chief Trader. Generally speaking they were practical fellows, zealous, thorough, and forcible. Yet they were unlike in personal characteristics. John was dominating, taciturn, and strictly reserved in his

treatment of the Indians both male and female. David was pleasant-mannered, dogmatical, proud of his physical prowess, and not inclined to be reserved where comely Indian women were concerned. The diffusiveness of his affections did not however prevent him from helping to make Fort God's Plenty one of the soundest and most prosperous, if one of the farthest, loneliest, and most perilous posts of the Honourable Company: farthest because it was within the Arctic Circle, between the Barren Grounds and the Metal River; loneliest, because its summer was so short and its winter so long; most perilous, because the cold was often deadly and wood was not plentiful, while coal was out of the question. Off in the farthest North was that unknown dominion where, wise men had said, no human being dwelt; where endless silence reigned, save when the meteors whirled through the night and the stars swept through the windless air. But did the wise men speak truly? Have not the wise been made as foolish since the birth of the world? The child and the heathen have confounded them. And concerning this distant place beyond the great hillocks of ice and the Arctic Sea, there were legends which passing through the minds of many generations had at last grown vague, while yet they did not entirely die. There still remained Medicine Men who pointed to the utmost North, and pointing made conjurations, and afterwards cured the sick, and also, it was darkly hinted, caused men to decay and die. But perhaps these ghostly gossips lied, and it was all as David Graham put it, "A twopenny juggle."

Until this strange traveller with the mask-like face came to the Fort a few hours before, these white men had never heard anything really definite concerning the mysterious folk who were supposed to dwell where the electric needle points downwards. It was in response to David Graham's pressing invitation to the visitor to give a taste of his quality as a Medi-

cine Man (for such they assumed him to be) that the song of which we know had been sung. The stranger, Tsaga, as he called himself, had appeared suddenly at the Fort with neither dog nor gun nor anything else apparently, save the Indian costume that he wore. He had eaten, he had drunk, and he had prattled his metrical history, or ritual, till the room reeled. "Tsaga, where did you learn all that?" said David Graham. "It sounds like a bit out of Ossian or some Norse saga."

And Tsaga slowly answered: "I have travelled much among the far tribes of whom you do not know, and who have knowledge of the White Weaver, the Maker of Light, and the people of whom I tell; and this is one of their legends."

It was noticeable that Tsaga spoke English with a peculiar precision, as if he were unaccustomed to its use and yet understood it.

"Who is the White Weaver, exactly, Tsaga? I do not understand," said Pascal Declare.

"It wasn't in your catechism at St. Genevieve, was it, Pascal?" rejoined David Graham. "Well, who *is* the Trailmaster, Monsieur Tsaga, Medicine Man and Prophet?"

"I understand not fully what it means," answered Tsaga. "We know not the completeness of all things suddenly. But beyond the roaring wastes of sea and ice there is at the summit of the world a people who have power to resist the forces of the elements and all causes that make decay. And they alone of the races of the earth possess this power, save those that live at the footstool of the world. There is the song of the White Weaver which has come down through the endless alleys of tradition. I have gathered its fragments from many places, that it be not lost even in this outside land whither it has come with those who were outlaws from the splendours of the summit of the world. Would you hear it?" He looked, as he said this, at

John Graham, who nodded assent, and straightway the song began :

Of the land of the rainbow fire, the waving sky, the long paths of light, and the mighty palaces, the song thereof as to the King.

When from the icebergs rises the powdered wind and the voice of the Angry One cracks through the aching clefts ;

When the mountains rock and lava rolls beneath the feet of the hunter and of her who waits by the tent-door ;

When from the evil place there come the red-mouthed bears, and the dreadful dragons, to ravish and destroy,—

None fears, nor hides, nor falleth.

For in the mightiest palace glows the eye of the White Weaver who liveth in the golden hill ;

And it giveth to the people the deathless frame, till that their time being full, they rise and pass away ;

Till that they rise and bid farewell to all that hang upon their necks, and take their spears and pass away ;

Till that they safely pass into the aching clefts and through the awful plains reaching the golden hills ;

And there have mighty lodges, wherein the fine gar-meat and the fish that giveth the sweet liquor are ;

Where they are and fail not, neither the tall gold feather of the tau, nor the soft down of the north swan ;

Nor many feasts within the happy valley, nor the smoke of the sweet frankincense, nor comely maids.

But they that remain are happy even as they that go, for they prevail against the evil things.

The hands of Tsaga were closed upon his breast and his fingers chafed each other ; but his countenance was like that of the mountain which rises in the heart of the Barren Grounds and has the head and face of a man. When he had finished the Chief Factor said gruffly, but yet as if provoking a reply : "The song is fine enough, Tsaga, but it's only Indian

bunkum after all. There never was anybody living at the North Pole."

To which Pascal Declare added with an affected intrepidity : "So! it is amusing! It is we who are the heathen after all ; we have lost something which at the summit of the world they have? Well, but it is droll!"

David Graham laughed, and smacked his lips upon his pipe-stem greedily, before he said : "I like the idea of the bears, and the dragons, and the happy valley, and the gar, and the liquor-fish, and the bed of swansdown, Tsaga ;" and he smacked his lips again, and shook his shaggy head with luxurious suggestiveness.

Tsaga, with his hand in his bosom and looking closely at him said : "And the comely maids to put the golden feathers in the hair?"

David Graham took his pipe out of his mouth in blank astonishment and said to Pascal Declare under his breath : "So help me! The fellow has said the very words that were in my mind."

Here Teddie muttered dreamily, "There are worse things on the earth than a comely maid."

It will be noticed that he only spoke of one comely maid. But then Teddie was young, and he was not used to solitude, and he had not yet learned to console himself among the heathen as David had done, nor to be indifferent as was the case with the Chief Factor. He had in his heart, poor lad, a place of mysteries, a shrine before which passed beautiful shadowy figures, any one of which might make him unutterably happy. They were intangible ; no faint, sweet perfumes floated up from their filmy garments, no strands of their wonderful hair caught his kisses ; but they were real to him, just as real as if they had been first swaddled in a birth-chamber and afterwards prettily made over again in Bond Street. So in the wide solitudes with the moose and the white eagle he thought

persistently of that other and possible world which, so far as he could see, he had left for ever. It was with him when he pitched between a mad rapid and a swift whirlpool, as he and his Indians made their bitter way still farther to the North-west, still towards the far Cathay; it floated before him as he lay among the dogs on the soundless plain and looked up to where was the Yagata, "the man who reclines on the sky,"—there! was he not even beginning to think in the language of the heathen, saying no longer, God, but Yagata? And to what might he not come? Is it strange that his youth was melancholy? He knew well that of the many who enlisted under the flag of the Company but few returned to that world of his dreams, and he could not become accustomed to the thought. He required something else than pemmican and moose-meat for his daily food; he desired other than tea and tobacco for his hourly refreshment. No, as the Chief Factor had said of him, he was not yet broken in. While a man carries Shakespeare or Byron in his canoe or on his dog-sled, he is not easily bended to the use of savage exile; he must become brutalised first. The time would come no doubt when he would seek forbidden things, when he would array himself among those who take many wives from among the heathen; but he could not do it now. Sometimes with a touch of the Chief Factor's cynicism he was minded, as here and there another had done, to send to the Honourable Company in London for a wife, as one should order a barrel of sugar, and receiving her in the yearly vessel should file the invoice and receipt her like common cargo. But he put that away from him, as kindred in its nature to the other rejected companionships. And he dreamed on still, as the words spoken in the presence of Tsaga and the rest bear witness when associated with the tone that gave them their real meaning. At the moment of his

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speaking the door opened, and there appeared one who, with the three brothers, had caused this room to be called by the Indians, Dini-day, which means "the room of the four;" a girl, tall and lissom like a shaft of Indian corn, with beautiful face, an abundance of brown wavy hair, and a fine rosy underflush to her cheeks. She was dressed in a moose-skin robe cunningly tanned and dyed, its folds hanging gracefully about her, while her feet were encased in moccasins embroidered in golden and red thread. She came to the Chief Factor, who had risen, as had they all when she entered, and putting her hand on his arm said musically, "My father!"

Sitting down again the Chief Factor took her fingers in his and held them on his shoulder. He felt them tremble as she looked at Tsaga and caught the gleam of his eyes, those living eyes in a dead countenance. "Ah!" she said, and turned away her head; then stooped and whispered in her father's ear, "He is a strange, unpleasant man, my father!" Then she seated herself at his feet. Pascal Declare's eyes were on her, as the eyes of Hiawatha were once on Minnehaha. Tomorrow he was to marry this child of the Chief Factor and of a chieftainess with a fair face who had ruled among a tribe in the North. John Graham had saved the chieftainess's life in a conflict between her people and their enemies, and she had left all to follow him. Yet the tribe she left were not her own people; for her mother and herself had been found floating in a canoe on the Metal River in the summer-time, the mother dead, herself alive, and bearing a parchment illegible in its faded characters. And since there was a legend among her saviours that one of fair countenance should come out of the North to rule over them, they cared for the child until she came to be a woman and then they made her a chieftainess. And then John Graham came. But many years had gone since this noble woman had departed, betwixt the dark and

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dawn, to the lodges of the morning where the gods are, leaving her child Nadha behind her. And before she passed she prayed that her body might be carried by her husband, alone, to an island in the Lake of Many Waters and there laid in a couch swung between four tall trees. This was duly done by her husband alone, without even dogs to draw the sled. But when he came back from that far journey, whereof he had never spoken to any man, and stumbled into Fort God's Plenty on frozen feet he smiled no more. And yet he was not given to anger; he was merciful and just, if feared. To his daughter he was surpassingly gentle, but he talked little with her, save to teach her his own language. And while she listened to him, her mind was filled with the words of her mother concerning the great spirits, and of mighty men who had conquered other mighty men and fearsome beasts. As years went on these memories faded away, so that they were but as dreams; but the bare discoloured parchment that her mother gave her she kept, wondering concerning it, and prizing it. In her early girlhood she had held herself aloof from the few Half-Breeds and the Indians of the Fort; but the time came when she was beloved by them for her great kindness in seasons of hardship and sickness. And when Pascal Declare came from Fort Seclusion frozen nearly to death, she nursed him and brought him back to life and vigour. Yet the rest had not been easy for him. Perhaps there was some ancient pride in her blood, some lofty shyness that held her from him; or was it simply that her mother had taught her that there was but one good man among this white race, and that was her father? Her uncles she regarded with a gentle reserve. They admired her, but only Teddie had any hearty commerce with her, and he could not understand her. At last, however, she had let Pascal Declare see her mind; her half-austere, half-childish fancies; her strange instincts;

her almost unnatural vision of things beyond her narrow sphere of life, as though there were concentrated in her the fine perception of a race.

What was it that chilled her so, and yet attracted her, as she met the eyes of Tsaga? What was it that shot like arrows through her brain, that sent memories moving like clouds before her eyes?

Then Tsaga rose and said: "The vision of youth is before me, the joy of the heart of father and lover. Of whom the father saith, 'She is the light of my home, and when she goeth I am in darkness; the past only is mine.' Of whom the lover saith, 'She bringeth the gladness of the sun; the first snow is not like to her in pureness, nor the song of the birds of the South in sweetness.' And Tsaga saith, 'There is night here that there may be morning there, for such is the will of the Spirits who rule.'"

The Chief Factor rose abruptly, and with gloomy brows, said: "Indian, your tongue babbles. Stop the run of it, or even the White Weaver shall not protect you from the elements we keep at Fort God's Plenty."

Tsaga laughed,—the click of a bauble behind a mask—and answered: "It is not given to all to be wise. Let not the Medicine Man be reproached or smitten. His meaning is kind; his words are true. Shall the elements fall upon him because of this?"

The Chief Factor looked at the man as if debating, then with a sigh sat down again, and David Graham said: "Tsaga, you've got a deuced queer face. It's like a big frost-bite before the squaws have rubbed it out with the snow. What ails it?"

Again something clicked grotesquely in Tsaga's throat as he replied: "It was a violent illness long ago."

"How long ago?"

"Two thousand moons ago, or more."

"Two thousand whiskies ago! You've been drinking. Doesn't it strike you, Tsaga, that even for an Injun your lies are rather strong?"

Tsaga shook his head protestingly, and David went on: "You say you're a Medicine Man, why don't you get the Spirits who rule, as you call 'em, to cure you? Can't you summon up the White Weaver or anything to restore your face?"

The other replied grimly: "There is a time for all things beneath the fires of Heaven."

Part of David Graham's reply was not refined, but it expressed his feelings: "Holy smoke!" he said. "Do you know that you are quoting the Bible? Where did you learn that? There are no missionaries on the wrong side of the Arctic Circle. And who taught you to speak English? What post of the H.B.C. in a misguided charity brought you up?"

Tsaga, ignoring one part of the question replied, "It is from the words of the White Weaver."

"Oh!—but what do you mean by the fires of Heaven?"

"The waving lights and the arrows of the sky."

"Bosh! you mean the sun and stars."

Tsaga shook his head: "No, not the sun and stars."

"Well, what the ——"

Where the curtains of the sky quiver in the night, and are blown hither and thither in the noonday;

Where the gateways of the mist open, that the eye seeth afar the place in which no shadows are;

And the perfect stillness reigneth and peak flasheth unto peak the utmost things;
——there Wisdom standeth.

Thus Tsaga chanted with eyes upon Teddie, into whose eyes again a thought had come. Might not this strange being tell him something of that future of his, which in its possibilities alternately oppressed him and gave him hope? In his mind he framed the words of the question by which he should seek the divinating office of the Medicine Man. This was a foolish thought of his perhaps, he

said at the same moment to himself, but then he was something of a dreamer. He was cursed, or blessed with the poetic temperament; and this fancy was probably not more fantastic than many others that he fondled in solitary moments; possibly less fantastic, because since the world began there have been those who have the gift of prescience; and why should the faculty have ceased in the nineteenth century? So he conned silently the words of his intended question. It was singular that this question had involuntarily shaped itself to the rhythmic motion of *Hiawatha* as it floated through his brain; yet not so strange after all, for Teddie half thought in verse which was the reflection of great men's verses. This did not however prepare him for what came after. As if in immediate response to his inward question, Tsaga, with his eyes intently fixed on the lad, said: "Would you hear the tale of Zus the Mighty Hunter, who loved the places where the many footsteps are, and the Mountain of Battles?"

There was a moment's silence. David Graham sniffed contemptuously; the Chief Factor's eyes were bent on vacancy; Nadha's brows were troubled as though by an effort of memory; and Pascal Declare murmured to himself an *ave*. Then the voice of Tsaga, less unnatural than it had been, almost human indeed, spoke these words slowly:—

The song of Zus, the mighty hunter. He that was young, that bounded over the plain, that slew the bear, and the sharp-clawed tau, and the dreadful dragon; that climbed the high mountain triumphing, that trod upon the red lip of the fiery hill and had no hurt.

Much he yearned for one who came not,
That should light his heavy hearthstone,
Empty gladness in his pathway,
Trim his arrows for the conflict,
Strain her long hair for his bowstring,
Welcome him the chiefest victor,
Place the sweetest meats beside him,
Bring his children out before him,
Drive the evil spirits from him.
Long he waited but she came not,

And his heart grew hot with longing.
 Long he hurled the spear and lance-head,
 Heedless trod the frozen plateau,
 Scorned the many comely women,
 Came not near the idle revels :
 Till from out a golden eyrie
 Peered the eye of Him who pities,
 Saw the youth and knew his sorrow ;
 Called the lightning out of heaven,
 Cleft for him a sudden pathway,
 Through the silent frowning mountains ;
 Drew him to the happy valleys,
 Closed the gateway of the mountains.
 But the people found his body,
 Standing like a column steady,
 Frozen to the endless quiet.
 And they cried : " He leaves his image ;
 Gone is Zus, the mighty hunter."

Teddie shuddered, as though a wave of frost had passed over him. When he raised his eyes which had been bent upon the floor, he saw that Nadha's face was hidden in the folds of her sleeve. Presently David said : " Tsaga, I've met many Medicine Men, but you are the cleverest of the lot by thousands. That isn't the patter of the tribes of the H.B.C. country. It sounds like the saga stuff of Iceland and Greenland. Perhaps you're some old Icelandic god incarnated, eh ? "

Tsaga's hollow voice answered : " I know not of whom you speak. As the days pass you will teach me, and you shall learn further of the wisdom of that people."

" As the days pass, Tsaga ! " said David. " Oh no ! We'll not have you here upsetting our Injuns. You'll have to take your wisdom somewhere else. We don't put up Medicine Men at this house for more than one night. We'll give you pemmican and whisky to-night, but to-morrow at the rising of the sun you are off, Monsieur Tsaga."

Tsaga turned with an ominous look towards the Chief Factor, who nodded approval of what his subordinate had said. The daughter's fingers pressed her father's arm. " My father ! " she whispered. " Nadha has not the tongue of the wise but her heart speaks. It may be the stranger has travelled far and is weary. If he be

evil, it were well not to make him angry ; if he be good, it is not like my father to say in the hour when happiness comes to his daughter, ' Stranger, be gone ! ' "

The Chief Factor now looked at David for a decision ; and David seeing this yawned a little and then said : " Well, Tsaga, I'll tell you what : do something just here that's very fine,—mind you, a very fine trick !—and we'll keep you here and feed you till the moon fills. But it must be something really first-rate. None of the dagger-and-board-swallowing business, remember !—nothing vulgar for Fort God's Plenty."

Without a word Tsaga stood slowly up, drew his clasped hand from his bosom and held it aloft over his head, loosening the fingers very slightly as he did so. Instantly there streamed through them an intense and startling brightness, like the light of the sun at noon, and the room quivered in the rays. There was in the ears of all the sound as of rushing waters ; then the faint clash of spears, and the dying roar of wild beasts, followed by strains of music almost unearthly in its sweetness. A brighter flash of light,—and then there was sudden darkness, and Tsaga's voice said as if from a distance, " Dost thou desire more ? "

A long breath came from each simultaneously. Nadha's eyes were troubled and dilated. She stepped forward into the space between Tsaga and the others, and using that antique fashion of speech which belongs to the highest of the heathen races, said : " Thou hast evil in thy heart. In that moment when the light burned there was an unfolding in my brain and all that thou art was growing clear to me, also the peril that thou carriest with thee, the dreadful thing,—" she put her hand to her forehead and paused. " But what it is I know not yet, for the light vanished, and the opening page of thy heart faded with it. Yet I know, by my mother's soul I know, that thou art cruel and deadly ! "

Tsaga's eyes shone keenly as he

answered: "Maiden, thou hast not rightly judged. There is no cruelty in my heart for thee. Thy destiny is fair. What thou faintly guessed at was blessing for thee and not evil."

The girl drew back to her father's side, regarding Tsaga with awe, and not entirely reassured; yet from the first she had felt a sense of fearful kinship to him, and so she struggled between her aversion and the strange attraction of his presence. And now the Chief Factor spoke in commanding tones: "The hour is late. Tsaga, this is the place where strangers sleep. There is a pile of buffalo-rugs in the corner; we have no beds of down at Fort God's Plenty."

Tsaga bowed, and David added: "A fellow that carries the sun in his pocket hardly needs buffalo-rugs!"

Teddie, standing silently apart, repeated to himself here, without any special relevancy, a verse of a poem which he had had cut from a stray magazine found in the yearly letter-packet:—

No pity, Lord, could change the heart
From red with wrong to white as wool.
The rod must heal the sin; but, Lord,
Be merciful to me a fool!

Tsaga's hand was in his bosom, and his eyes, half closed, were fixed on Teddie. In slow hesitating tones, as if he were reading with difficulty from the pages of a book, he said:—

Earth bears no balsam for mistakes.

Men crown the knave and scourge the tool

That did his will; but Thou, O Lord,
Be merciful to me a fool!

The very words Teddie was saying to himself before Tsaga uttered them! He started, and looked at the man sharply, but did not speak. David Graham laughed and turning on his way to the door, said: "Tsaga, you mix up your devotion to the Lord and to the White Weaver with a nice disregard of proportion." And with a good-natured toss of his shaggy head he disappeared, followed by all the

others, save Teddie, who lingered musingly. Tsaga touched his arm. "The girl Nadha," he said; "whence came she, who was her mother?"

Teddie told him quickly all he knew. Tsaga bent his head and did not reply. After a moment Teddie went on: "Tsaga, you're not like any Medicine Man I ever saw before. I should like to ask you some questions."

Tsaga remained silent for a moment and then replied: "Wait until the hour of my departure. For are not the words of Him whose words are wise these:—'With thy foot upon the threshold as thou goest thou shalt make a full return; thou shalt not be niggard of wisdom nor scant in blessing.'"

Teddie replied impulsively: "There's a lot of poetry in your stuff, Tsaga. But I want prophecy. I,—I didn't like that about Zus, the Mighty Hunter. Did you make it up as you went on, or what? It was immensely like *Hiawatha*. Where did you ever read it? . . . Oh, all right then, I won't ask these things now. But I want some prophecy not so,—so—confoundedly grim!" And with a smile which was something wistful, and a quick good-night, he was gone.

Tsaga stood for a moment looking at the closed door, a sinister figure in the dim room. Then he stretched out his arms swiftly and said exultingly: "The hour of my release is at hand. These are three of one race: one lives in the present, feeding on the heated fruits of the flesh; after the wedding-feast to-morrow the heart of the father will be altogether in the past; and the other, the lad of many dreams, liveth in the future and findeth no joy in anything that is now or that has been. Are not the measures complete? These three shall sit before me yielding up their lives, and on their outgoing breath I shall be borne to the summit of the world, no longer to wander nor to sleep. The smell of the mighty cedars shall greet my nostrils, the gar-flesh I shall eat, and I shall drink the sweet liquor of the dak-fish. I

shall come in some not far off day in peace unto the golden hill ; I shall stand in the gateway of the lofty palace and call unto the ruler of my people and he will hear me ; and the light shall be once more within the shrine ! . . . The girl Nadha ! She too, however it be, hath in her veins the blood of my race. Her face is as the face of her who was with me two thousand moons ago. As I looked into her mind I read there that she hath a parchment of faded characters which she cherisheth, because her mother gave it unto her. She shall read it at the fitting time. And it may be that I shall come again and bring her to our people . . . but it must not be now. She shall live and her husband shall find joy in her, until she too sets her face towards the summit of the world."

Then there was silence, and Tsaga slept.

The next morning the contract of marriage was signed, the Chief Factor joining the hands of the lovers. Upon Nadha had fallen a dream. She moved as one swayed by some subtle narcotic that lifted her spirit up while her feet were still held to the rocking world. She spoke softly, and the smile upon her face did not change. Half-Breeds came in and gave her embroidered belts and *capotes* of well-tanned moose-skin, fringed with beavers' fur. Esquimaux presented her with bags of swansdown that her feet might be warm in them when the harsh night fell, or a dreaded *poudre* day found them upon the plains. Indians brought her the skins of the white fox, rare pouches of reindeer's hide, and knives made from the tusks of the narwhal. And while she shivered, not wholly with aversion, Tsaga clasped about her robe of fawn-skin a belt of some sparkling metal that glistened like silver and had links and interlacings of pure gold, wrought with a rude yet graceful skill. David called her to the window and showed her his gift of a team of eight Esquimaux dogs belted and caparisoned and unscarred as yet

by whip or tooth ; to which Teddie had added a cariole with ivory runners and lined with the fur of the marten and the seal. Her father had filled a sled amply with the few things that make life endurable in a frozen world, and her husband clasped upon her wrists two broad bracelets of gold that he had purchased years before from an Esquimaux, who in turn had been given them by the officer of a French vessel wrecked upon the coast of Labrador. And there was another gift as well, not understood perhaps by Half-Breeds, Indians, or Esquimaux, but which in the light of coming events was at least striking. "In the name of God, according to these vows that you have made and the contract you have signed and in the presence of these witnesses, I proclaim you man and wife. Amen!" said the Chief Factor, his usually grave face seeming yet sterner with the effort of emotional repression. Then Teddie stepped forward impulsively, yet somewhat timidly, and read these verses from a paper illuminated with the rude paints of the Indians :—

Heart of the world, give heed !
Tongues of the world, be still !
The richest grapes of the vine shall bleed
Till the greeting-cup shall spill ;
The kine shall pause in the pleasant mead,
The eagle upon the hill.
Heart of the world, give heed !

Heart of the world, break forth !
Tongues of the world, proclaim !
There cometh a voice from out the North,
Between a shadow and flame,—
A man's soul crying, "I sing thy worth
O Love of my life and name."
Heart of the world break forth !

Heart of the world, be strong !
Tongues of the world, be wise !
The white North glows with a morning-song
Or ever the red sun dies ;
For love is summer, and love is long,
And the good God's in His skies.
Heart of the world, be strong !

Teddie's face glowed, Pascal Declaire's eyes were moist, the father

turned his head away, and David grinned somewhat confusedly; even the savages had been touched by the lad's earnestness. Nadha took the paper as if she saw not, and then suddenly put her hands upon Teddie's shoulders and kissed him on the cheek. They might have been brother and sister, so near of an age were they. This was the first time she had ever kissed him, and—but there's time enough to speak of that! Only Tsaga was unmoved. His face was turned towards them but his eyes did not look at them. He seemed to have no part in the comedy now. He stood motionless while hunter, *voyageur*, and trapper made their congratulations. He sat unmoving while the guests feasted on the wild meats of the North and drank till their brains swam. At last the two trains of dogs were drawn up before the door and all came forth into the square to see the departure. At the moment when the two Half-Breed gunners upon the wall were ready to fire, when the fingers of the revellers were upon their rifles for a fusillade, when every good-bye had been uttered, Tsaga came swiftly forward to the cariole and said in a low tone to the bride, "By a flame of fire shall that which is hidden be revealed;" then he stepped back again and was lost among the crowd. There was a cry from the Indian who drove the leading train of dogs, a waving of hands, the rattle of musketry, the blundering noise of the little-used cannon, and the two were gone into the north and west towards Fort Seclusion.

They travelled all day through the increasing cold, speaking but little, their faces covered from the deadly frost. About nine o'clock at night they reached the hut where they were to camp. At this hour Tsaga was entering the Dini-day at Fort God's Plenty. The three brothers sat there in silence. They turned to look at him as he entered and took a seat at the table, but none spoke. From without the house there came the shouts of

a drunken Indian, but all was still within.

For a long time the three smoked on in silence, then one by one they put their pipes down as though some thought absorbed them completely. Tsaga with his right hand in his bosom read their thoughts, and said within his heart: "The time is now come! Yet the one is just and strong, the other is full of mirth and lusty life, and the lad is young and noble." There was a struggle in his breast. Yet what were these three to him that he should pause! And the girl Nadha,—she of the same origin as himself! Was she to be the one coming out of the south that should unite the heathen from the outside land with them who lived at the summit of the world? He closed his eyes and strained his will to conquer space. Slowly a vision came. He saw a hut where a bright fire burned and beside the fire stood a man and a maiden. And the maiden said: "His words were, 'By a flame of fire shall that which is hidden be revealed.'" She raised her eyes to the man who bent his brows in thought. After a time he said: "The parchment, the parchment, Nadha!" She drew it from her bosom and gave it to him. He kneeled quickly and held it to the fire, and forthwith there appeared on it writing in the language of those Indians among whom Nadha's mother had been a chieftainess; and this was the writing as Nadha read it:

When this is found I shall be gone away—I speak of a race that liveth at the summit of the world. And the Spirit obeyed by men in that country is called the White Weaver, the Maker of Light. And there was in a shrine of the lofty palace of the King a clear sardonyx stone which was called the eye of the White Weaver. But in the delirium of approaching death the King cast the shrine into a flaming hill and it was lost, though the mountain henceforth flames for ever because of it. But it was told by the White Weaver to the King coming after, that in the quarries of the Metal River in a country called the Outside Land where the heathen were, there was one clear sardonyx

stone which finding there should be peace, and evil should stand far off from the summit of the world. But he who found the stone must, after building a shrine for it, straightway return with it to the summit of the world. Now one of the pilgrims was young and glad of the pleasures of life, and, forgetful of the great command, loved a woman of the heathen at the Metal River. And one day as he laboured he suddenly cried out, for he had found the burning sardonyx stone by which those who live at the summit of the world were able to know each other's minds, so that there be only justice and truth. But the young man, desiring to persuade the unwilling woman to accompany him, hid from his fellows the finding of the stone. And, the spirit of the White Weaver being angry, he confused the brains of the men that they wandered in the heathen lands till they died. And he that hid the sardonyx stone in his bosom was condemned to sleep one hundred years, and then to wander for one hundred years in the heathen land with a face like to the dead, until he should find three pale brothers of one family, whom destroying as a sacrifice he should be free, and should return to his own country. And I am come through many generations of one of those pilgrims, who were to die in exile. These are my last words before I die near a people that shall take my child and cherish it.

Pascal Declare's breath came heavily as Nadha read; and having read she turned wild eyes upon him and sank into his arms unconscious.

And Tsaga caused his mind to relax and said: "It is even so, there is no other way." And yet he paused thrice ere at last with a swift action he caught the one clear sardonyx stone from his bosom with a sharp cry. The three brothers turned quickly towards him and as they did so an intolerable brightness struck through their eyes,

and stayed suddenly the vital forces. But yet it was not so sudden with the lad Teddie. He rose from his seat with a moan which yet was not all pain; "My love!" he cried, and then sank slowly back again in his place still and rigid, as something like a laugh of triumph rang through the deadly brightness towards him.

Then the room grew dark again save for the dim light of the candle. For a long time Tsaga stood motionless looking upon the three. His face, with the death-look vanished, was now as that of other men; and on it was a smile of lofty pity. He drew near to Teddie, and touched his forehead gently, saying, "Thou hast found her now!" and turning vanished through the door.

When next night two anxious faces peered through this doorway the three still sat where Tsaga had left them, awfully alone, the moonbeams mingling with their smiles. For indeed they smiled as does a drowned man who had pleasant visions as he passed. And the two who saw this thing trembled and were overwhelmed. But the woman turned at last and said through the cloud of her grief: "Pascal, my husband, I am of that people! Thou and I will go to the summit of the world. We will have lives for these!" But how they went there, and the tale of their journey and of that which came after, must be told elsewhere.

And this is the truth regarding the death of John, David, and Teddie Graham at Fort God's Plenty, though the records of the Hudson's Bay Company say, with the brutal simplicity of official documents, that they were frozen to death.

GILBERT PARKER.

ON AN IRISH SNIPE-BOG.

It is the first week of November. The south-west wind, that is hurling the long rollers of the Atlantic in cataracts of foam upon the wild capes of Kerry, laden with scudding clouds and autumn leaves and splattering showers, goes moaning and sobbing inland over the Distressful Country.

Far however beyond the sound of the Atlantic or any other ocean the big bog of Rathvooney thrusts its dreary levels through an undulating region of central Ireland, and it is on such a day as this that the bog of Rathvooney, to my thinking at any rate, appeals most strongly to the imagination. On this dull, grey, wintry morning the spirit of Solitude is indeed abroad upon the bare silent landscape ; and it is under her grey wings that the desolation of Rathvooney ceases to be desolate and becomes sublime. There is no sunlight, no suggestion even of sun, to break the spell of pervading gloom, and throw into too prominent relief the encircling belts of civilization that have struggled for generations with its water-logged fringes. Angry clouds rush in wild career through the murky sky at a pace that seems all the madder from the unruffled, sombre, irresponsive solitude over which they race. Behind us on the edge of the bog the ash trees have flung off the last remnant of their leaves. The oaks and the beeches still rattle the dry bones of theirs in the wind, and the long belts of fir wood over whose soft carpet we have just trod play mournful music among their tossing tops. Far away to the west, mile upon mile, far enough at any rate on such a day as this to touch the ever-shifting horizon, and flat as a calm sea, stretches the russet coloured crust of the buried, vanished forest. Nor yet quite vanished either, for here we have more perfect

remains of the primæval trees to whose decomposition the bog of Rathvooney owes its existence than are often seen even in Ireland. The turf-cutting of generations has been done at this corner, and for a quarter of a mile or so, before mounting on to the virgin bog, our steps lie over the hard bed from which the layer of turf ten or twelve feet thick has been removed. All around us, standing one and sometimes two feet above the dark powdery mould that covers the poor unreclaimed soil, looking for all the world like the stumps on a ten-year-old American clearing, stand solid and sound the butts of trees whose last leaves fell no man can say when. Perhaps a thousand, possibly two thousand years ago. At any rate the half century or so they have been uncovered must be but an item in their long existence. There are acres and acres of them here at Rathvooney, firm in the earth where each living tree stood, now bleached white and hard as iron. Here and there too an entire trunk, that from some cause has escaped decomposition, lies half buried in the mould.

They are an uncanny sight, if you let the mind dwell on them, these skeletons of things that grew and flourished at another period of the world's history. They stand up in your path to-day as if the bark had only just peeled off them, and the gashes on their stumps might almost have been made by the axes of men who had voted for Mr. Parnell or contributed to the coffers of the Land League. This is of course not the season when the turf-cutter is abroad, and the rows of donkey-carts that earlier in the year may be seen hauling each peasant's store homeward have long disappeared. The only human being within sight is Pat, who awaits

our approach up on the high bog itself. Snipe, I regret to say, and neither nature in her joyous or pathetic moods, nor yet prehistoric relics, are to-day the object of our immediate quest; and the fluttering spectre outlined against the sky above us, is thus addressed.

"Pat!"

"Sorr!"

"Will the snipe be on the red bog or on the marshes to-day?"

"It'll be upon the red bog, yer honour, the snipes will be this day."

It should be explained in passing that snipe in Ireland are so numerous, and the area of their feeding and lying ground, owing to the nature of the country, is so vast that wind and weather are a most material consideration to the sportsman who would pursue them with success. In hard weather, when the surface of the peat bogs is crusted with frost, the birds scatter all over the country, haunting the marshy meadows and half-drained pastures which are kept ever soft and moist by rising springs and running streams. Other conditions too, not always evident to the eye even of the expert, affect the choice of the snipe between the meadows and the bogs. But in the first grey dawn of a soft November day, such as this, if you were to take your stand near yonder fir woods, you would hear the whistle of innumerable snipe hurrying from their nightly feeding-grounds to the snug cover of the far-stretching bog.

Pat's opinion to-day is sought rather out of deference to his feelings than from any doubt as to his answer. His appearance, it may be noted, is in thorough harmony with the pathos of the surrounding landscape. Standing up on the edge of the black cliff of turf formed by the cut-away bank of bog, a pond of black peat-water lapping drearily at his feet, he presents against the background of gray scudding clouds a monument of fluttering rags. I don't mean to say that Pat's clothes were merely torn, or simply had holes in them. But what had once no doubt been a coat and trousers now

fluttered from his body in an indistinguishable mass of parti-coloured streamers. If scarecrows, or what the Scotch more pithily call "tatie-bogles," were not hopelessly out of their element on an Irish bog, Pat, in his moments of repose upon a windy day, would have no chance whatever of being taken for flesh and blood. If perchance some curious Saxon, prosecuting a personal investigation of the Irish question were to stumble on Pat to-day, he would most likely see in his tattered garments an "object-study" of Ireland's woes, of rack-rents, and landlords, of famines, evictions, and all the rest of it. Such an impression however, like many other impressions carried away by the searcher after truth in this strange land, would be ludicrously wide of the mark. A closer inquiry into Pat's material circumstances would reveal the fact that, whatever the cause of Pat's nakedness, it is not for want of the wherewithal to clothe himself. For this "tatie-bogle" is head-keeper to a very large property indeed. And so far as that office goes in this part of the world, everything within sight, upon one side of us at any rate, or that would on a brighter day be in sight, bogs and tillage, woods and mountains, is in the custody of our friend and his underlings. Pat moreover has a fifty-acre farm at a low rent, and is a warm man all round. His indifference to personal appearances can only be attributed therefore to parsimony, aided no doubt by the consciousness of superiority to the petty requirements of dress.

Local opinion is universal that snipe are not nearly so numerous in Ireland as they once were. In the days before the famine, when the whole shoulder of yonder mountain, now run wild again in heather and bog-grasses and spouting with wet, was covered with potato-plots and patches of oat-fields; when blackthorns were at a premium, and elections meant glorious opportunities for using them; when priests were jovial and cultured, and

landlords were more resident if more reckless; and when light-hearted misery stalked abroad on fourpence a day,—those were the times from which the great snipe-legends come down, when the heroes of them not only filled the pockets and linings of their long-skirted shooting-coats with the victims of their prowess, but were compelled to stuff them into the tops of their boots, and even into the crowns of the tall hats so punctiliously worn by the gentlemen-sportsmen of those palmy days. It is true that some of the present generation of Irish snipe-shooters are audacious enough to question the accuracy of these time-honoured legends, and ascribe to the garrulity of old age, and the soothing influences of time and soft arm-chairs, the prodigious figures to which they run, and the unerring accuracy of aim that never seemed to fail.

Though snipe are present more or less everywhere in Ireland, it is in the great bogs that cut their level way through the cultivated undulating plains of central and southern Ireland, rather than in the continuously wild uplands near the western coast, that they are most numerous. Nothing like the bags that were once made, or are said to have been made, in Ireland could, I think, be achieved anywhere in that country to-day. At the same time the birds are infinitely more numerous and far more widely distributed than in any district upon this side of St. George's Channel. Anglesea is one of the best snipe-districts of Great Britain; but the number of birds that rise within range during an ordinary day upon an Irish bog would be far greater than, under the most auspicious occasions, would offer themselves to a sportsman in the bleak refuge of the Druids.

As Pat has observed, there is every prospect of finding the birds upon the bog to-day. Old Don, who is our sole canine assistant, is a snipe-dog *par excellence*. By this I don't mean to say that he is not every bit as painstaking and staunch over partridge or

grouse; but for the latter he is a bit slow. His kennel-companions have generally done their work and found their game before he is well started in his investigations, so that there is really nothing left for him to do but to "back" them, in which negative performance, to do him justice, he is never found wanting. Such a secondary position however will in the long run depress any well-constituted canine nature, and Don, like the sagacious setter that he is, has decided that snipe-shooting is his vocation and appears to have made a speciality of it and to have cultivated the aroma of the glorious little bird with marvellous success. Sportsmen in countries where the snipe is only an "incidental," and who require and expect very little notice of its presence from their dogs, would, I think, be amazed at the distance which Don will carry his master or his master for the time being, up to a crouching snipe, and what immense importance he attaches to the neighbourhood even of a "Jack."

The old setter is to-day in his element, as he ranges backwards and forwards before us with a care and deliberation well suited to our own rate of progress. For walking on a red bog, though straightforward enough and comparatively dry, is just sufficiently spongy to make each lifting of the foot a slight wrench; a wrench not much felt in the excitement of the chase, but which leaves unmistakable sensations in the lower part of the spine when the day is over.

You can't quite trust a snipe to lie even to a steady dog like a September partridge in a potato patch. Your pace up to the "point" therefore is sometimes more hurried than dignified; and as even the high and dry bog abounds in little green mossy cups just large enough to let one leg in as far as it will go, a day's snipe-shooting is seldom without its incidents, provocative of mirth in the long run if not to the victim of the moment.

As one snipe springs from before the dog's nose, and another rises wilder

beyond, our first two shots go booming across the bog. A pack of grouse, some fifty in number, rise far away and go scudding over the brown waste till they are lost from sight between the sombre earth and the grey sky. Two or three more snipe spring wild at the sound, and fly windward at a pace and height that look as if nothing short of the distant mountains was their goal. They turn however again at the very verge of sight and the faint black specks become for a few moment less indistinct, then suddenly from high in mid air fall rapidly slantwise across the sky to the earth with that peculiar deliberation common to the snipe when he has made up his mind about his ambush. A curlew piping out its plaintive notes flies over us, but at that safe distance which distinguishes the wariest of birds, and a string of teal scared from some reedy pool on the bog-edge go speeding towards its centre and the lonelier haunts where they were bred.

To-day however we are neither stalking wild fowl, nor cherishing fond and foolish hopes of getting within a quarter of a mile of bog-grouse in the middle of November. Snipe on this occasion are our sole care, and to render a good account of them even in Ireland requires undivided attention. A good deal of loose talk goes on about snipe-shooting; that it is a knack easily acquired and easily maintained, as simple, in fact, some people in the snug security of the smoking-room would have us believe, as shooting grouse over dogs in August. Nothing can be more absurd. In eastern countries where they are found in enormous numbers and lie very close, so that the sportsman can more or less pick his shots, snipe-shooting is no doubt a very much simpler affair. There are also in this country beyond question some first-rate shots who have developed a special deadliness in this particular department. Nevertheless the snipe, as he is in the British islands, will get away from a good average shot with a frequency that

no other bird could possibly hope to attain, and to stop him requires upon the whole greater accuracy and smartness than is called for in any other branch of shooting. Sometimes a snipe, rising near, will for some reason or other fly steadily and even with apparent slowness right across the front of the sportsman, and afford an easy shot. But as a rule our little long-billed friend gets away with lightning quickness, and often begins those diabolical antics for which he is famous before you have covered him. Often too he rises at a distance which even in the case of a partridge or a grouse would not leave much time for aiming. When on such terms as these with the *scolopax major* you must be smart indeed.

Generally upon the dry bog the birds will be found lying singly. From the reedy pools however, that are scattered about here and there in its centre, but more numerous along its edges, and in which thick crops of rushes and sedge-grass grow, three or four and sometimes a whole wisp will rise, often in such cases wild, and scatter over the sky. Here on Rathvooney I have seen as many as fifty in the air at once.

To-day, as ever at this season, the whole bog teams with bird-life. Duck and teal, grouse and plover, are kept unceasingly upon the wing by the booming of our guns as we beat backwards and forwards over the dreary levels. Even an old hare, safe in those untrodden wilds, as she thinks, from beagle and greyhound, may spring from the heather at our feet and go cantering at half speed over the rough ground, an easy prey, if the desire for her slaughter were in our heart. But it is not, for the scant hares of Rathvooney are reserved for a nobler fate than a charge of shot. Time was when the scarlet coat of the fox-hunter was a familiar object on the green pastures that skirt the shores of the bog; but times are changed. The red livery, "England's bloody red," was to the political agitator as the cloth it was

made of is supposed to be to the properly constituted bull, and in these parts his machinations gradually triumphed. Out of the ashes of fox-hunting however has emerged the inoffensive "thistle-whipper," who can cheer on his little dogs after poor puss unmolested by internecine strife. The latter, if she ever discusses the state of Ireland with the once harried foxes of the Rathvooney woods, may well quote the familiar proverb, "What is one man's meat is another's poison."

Snipe-shooting is a fascinating sport, and there are plenty of birds upon the bog to-day, but it would be preposterous to ask the reader to follow us further in our long marches backward and forward over the flat brown heath and under the grey sky. It would be wearisome to tell how this snipe lay close to old Don's point, or that one went twisting off at the first scent of danger; how one was caught by the pitiless charge of No. 8 in its first dash for life, and fell a light puff of grey feathers into the mimic waves of a bog-hole; how another turned up its white under-feathers through the hanging smoke of a futile shot and with a *scrawk!* *scrawk!* of derision cleared the dull background of bog and hill and shot up and away into the restless sky. The sporting writer who undertakes to carry even the most sympathetic reader with him from point to point, and from shot to shot, takes a long pull indeed on the latter's indulgence. It is remarkable even then how he hails the luncheon-hour as a brief break in the monotonous narration. We have no shady side of a hedge however to spread a cloth under, or dilate about to-day. A pitiless rain-storm beats over the bog at the hour when the cravings of nature are getting urgent. And for the shelter of a deep drain we are profoundly grateful at this moment, though we have to eat our lunch crouching in the six inches of running water that covers the bottom of it.

The light wanes on such days as this long before the proclaimed hour

of sunset. By the time we have fired our last shot, have descended from the firm bog and are picking our way through the ponds and quagmires that the turf-cutter has left in his track, the wind, that has all day been whistling in our gun-barrels, has dropped. The grey pall of clouds that has obscured the sky has lifted in the west, and a pale green band of light spreads all across the horizon. The turgid bog-holes no longer lap their black waves against the tall fringing grasses and reeds, but gleam white and still amid the dark expanse in which they lie. Above the ragged tops of the fir woods the cushats are circling in great flocks, and partridges are calling from the oat-stubble beyond; and it is yet light enough to see some distant strings of wild fowl beating their way towards their nightly quarters.

As we leave the bog to the solitude which even the melancholy of closing day can scarcely emphasize, our path is turned aside by the obtruding walls of one of those grim spectres of her stormy and chaotic past that are so common in Ireland. The pile of rude masonry before us has neither name nor history. Irish memories treasure much, much perhaps that had better be forgotten. But who shall say what were these rough, roofless, and weather-beaten walls that have been dropping their grey stones for centuries upon the turf; or who what manner of half barbarous chieftains fought and ravaged from here along the borders of the Pale? Desmond and Fitzgerald, Butler and O'Moore, all in their turn had a hand likely in the wild work that these stones could tell of if they could only speak. There is no sign here of the builder's or the mason's pride, no trace upon the rough walls or the wreckage beneath them of the artificer's cunning; no spray of ivy even in all these years has tried to scale the dark forbidding pile. Defence and defiance made the sole care of its builders. Indeed in mediæval or

Elizabethan, or even in Cromwellian Ireland the stone-worker's chisel would have been in scant demand, I fancy, on the shores of the great bogs beyond the Pale. The antiquary and the archæologist are not abroad in these parts. Even local legend has little to say on the subject of this grim relic of a hideous age, about which so little is known that its most diligent chroniclers can scarcely agree in any point save that it was bathed in blood. Perhaps if you have struggled recently with the strange conflicting tales of lawlessness and rapine, of massacre and race-hatred, of which these stones and others like them are not unhappily the only survivals, there will be something of a fascination about this nameless ruin brooding over the dreary wastes of Rathvooney. A fascination of the kind that might be wanting if you could purchase its complete history in the neighbouring village for sixpence, and procure photographs and ginger-beer in its grass-grown courts.

In the two or three miles that lie between us and home, modern Ireland, both animate and inanimate, is amply typified. The long, grey twilight will serve us for our passing notes. If it does not, no matter. The objects we shall meet on an oft-trodden path are familiar enough. Strings of ass-carts are jogging along the highway, for it has been market-day in the neighbouring town. Some of their drivers have been too evidently celebrating something else than the centenary of Father Mathew, but the patient, half-fed, rough-coated beasts that draw them keep their rank in the procession as if to conceal their master's shame. Two or three couples of stalwart constables, in their smart uniforms, on their way to some country barrack, salute my companion with military precision. The bells of a Jesuit Convent of recent settlement ring out from a neighbouring height, and a long procession of its dark-robed inmates goes streaming homeward over a neighbouring pasture. A horse-

man, approaching at no snail's pace, reins his steed up on its haunches as he comes level with us, and seems to be in a state of great excitement.

"Have you heard the news, Masther Tom?"

I may here parenthetically observe that one of the privileges of living out your life in the place where you were born is that of perpetual youth. What are wrinkles and grey hairs? What are the cares of office, the responsibilities of middle life, if everybody a little older than yourself calls you "Masther Tom"?

"I have not," says Masther Tom.

Now an Englishman unacquainted with the main features of Irish country life would be apt to infer from the attitude of our friend on horseback, that the French had landed, or that the Chief Secretary had been assassinated, or at the very least that Mr. William O'Brien or Dr. Tanner had performed one of those desperate acts of heroism which the modern patriot delights in. Nothing of the sort! The news is of a kind that would be, I am quite sure, of more interest to four people out of five in the neighbourhood, than any political contingency however momentous, for it is to the effect that Pat Murphy has sold his bay mare to a Dublin dealer for £150! Now anybody who knows anything at all of country life in Ireland must know also what profound interest is taken in every local horse that carries a saddle on its back. I would go further, and say that I think it would be scarcely possible for any one who was indifferent to the virtues of the noble animal, and disinclined or unable to discuss them, to live at all in the south of Ireland and maintain the respect of his neighbours.

I remember well many years ago being the recipient of the confidences on this subject of a young sub-inspector of police who was quartered in this district. He was an Englishman, just come from Oxford with no small reputation as an athlete, but entirely fresh not only to Irish life but to country life

generally, and having no acquaintance worth mentioning with the noble animal and its ways. They played however such a conspicuous part both in his professional and social duties that he had nothing for it but to struggle with the art of horsemanship, and to educate himself into a proper mental attitude on the horse-question generally. The progress in this particular of the sub-inspector, and the incidents that marked it, afforded a target for all the wit and good-humoured chaff, to say nothing of the practical joking, that half a county had to spare. And there is no country in the world where the supply of those commodities is so formidable as Ireland, more especially when exercised upon such a topic. The poor fellow worked very hard however to achieve the esteem of his neighbours, and seemed really making some way, when an untoward accident happened that brought on a serious relapse. On a cold winter's morning the stalwart form of the young officer revealed itself in the most pitiable plight to the eyes of (unfortunately!) the greatest wag of the neighbourhood. Standing at the edge of a soft green strip of bog skirting the high road, clad in full uniform the whole of which from his smart forage cap to his well-polished boots was covered with a thick cake of wet black mud, he was hauling away, and to all appearance vainly, at a dark object just showing above the green slime, which a nearer inspection proved to be his charger. The unhappy young gentleman was cursing the country with the singularly hearty maledictions that a true Briton is apt to bestow on an alien soil when it is treating him badly. Ultimately, and with some difficulty, the horse was dragged out with ropes; and it was discovered that his rider had turned off the road to have a canter on what he conceived to be turf! Then indeed did the poor subaltern of police seriously contemplate resigning his commission, or applying for an exchange to some more sedately-minded and remote community where the

horrid story could not follow him. He stayed to live it down however, and even achieved some later distinction by driving his horse, trap, and himself one dark night, without material damage to anything concerned, over a five-barred gate. That the performance was quite unintentional was entirely overlooked by the generous folks to whom the sub-inspector's adventures had given such long-continued delight. It was a noble exploit; that was enough, and full credit was given to the performance.

Here, again, standing by the road is a tenantless lodge, where a gate off its hinges and a long avenue of noble beeches lead to a large sad-coloured square house from which the stucco has fallen in great cakes. There died here not long ago a queer specimen of the old-fashioned Irish gentleman and a remarkable survival of old-fashioned Irish ideas. In his youth he was the great snipe-shot of the county; in his old age the terror of the local Bench of which he was chairman. His legal decisions were influenced to such an unblushing extent by his personal feelings for the subject of them, and were delivered in such a glorious brogue, that some of them were worth crossing Ireland to hear, and many will live in local history for all time. Agriculture was the favourite hobby of this hero's declining years, though no one from a cursory glance at the condition of his demesne would have supposed so. Long discussions on artificial manures and sub-soil draining between the chairman of the Bench and the prisoner or witnesses had become quite a recognised feature of the operations at the neighbouring court-house,—a feature more relished by the ragged unkempt throng at the back of the court than by the rest of the impatient justices. The boast of this departed worthy was that he had not slept out of his own house since the Exhibition of 1851. The boast of his neighbour on the other hand might fairly be that he has never slept in his own

house, and very seldom in Ireland at all during the course of an already advanced life. As if to throw into sharp contrast two familiar types of Irish landlord, fate has ordained that their respective possessions should lie side by side, for here, not half a mile along the road, are the great iron gates, and well-built park-wall that enclose the stately desert of one of those perennally absent magnates to whom the professional agitator ought to be so profoundly grateful. It is an instructive study, this smooth expanse of wood and park shut in and hidden from the outside world by a ring fence. Outside there is little to remind you of England; inside it there is still less suggestive of Ireland, except perhaps that the solitude which accompanies the grandeur has evidences of permanency about it that would have no parallel in this happier land. In the park, which is so large that the drive is a mile long, fallow deer are grazing; spreading lawns and ornamental lakes surround the house on all sides. This is no fox-hunting squire's residence, but the palace of a *grand seigneur*; a cold, stately pile of Georgian origin and considerable pretensions, suggestive of an interior rich in old pictures and costly treasures, with a grave house-keeper who, for a consideration, shows them to tourists and other humble folk who have picnicked in the park under the big trees. But no tourists or visitors ever wake the echoes or darken the doors of these deserted halls, unoccupied for fully fifty years. A great Cromwellian was the ancestor of the present peer; none of your captains, or sergeants, or troopers who blossomed out gradually in the whirligig of time and periodical eruptions into landowners and squires and justices of the peace. This Cromwellian

was a great chief, and a vast tract of country fell to his share under the brief stern rule of the Protector. On this tract his soldiers and captains settled by whole troops. To this day their descendants are very numerous, and have withstood in a marvellous manner the waves of conflicting races that so often in later days swept backwards and forwards over these older settlements. Their hereditary chief is no longer with them, it is true, but for many miles over the country that stretches towards the mountain, an eye, used to Irish landscape, would mark the unwonted neatness and thrift in house and homestead which in these southern counties so generally denotes the presence of a strong Protestant element.

There is yet just light enough to make out the form of a tall column, which rises from the crest of a wooded hill behind the mansion and traces itself indistinctly against the fast darkening sky. Nothing however can be seen at this distance of the martial image that crowns it. The image of a descendant of the great Cromwellian who went out from these retired glades to achieve imperial and world-wide fame. There is much of irony, and much of pathos too, in this weather-beaten figure of stone, this hero of courts and camps perched up in the clouds and mists with the wild bogs on the one side and the wilder mountains on the other. A solitary sentinel he seems to be, keeping mournful watch over his long deserted halls; doomed to gaze for ever over the broad domains in which for half a century, up there on his stony pedestal between heaven and earth, he has been the only resident of his famous name.

A. G. BRADLEY.

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45	3 5 9	3 17 6	4 16 4	8 0 7	48 0 8	45
46	3 8 5	4 0 0	4 19 1	8 4 6	49 2 8	46
47	3 11 5	4 2 8	5 2 1	8 8 8	50 5 8	47
48	3 14 8	4 5 8	5 5 4	8 13 2	51 9 7	48
49	3 18 1	4 8 9	5 8 9	8 17 11	52 14 1	49
50	4 1 7	4 12 1	5 12 4	9 2 10	53 19 3	50
51	4 5 6	4 15 5	5 16 1	9 7 11	55 4 5	51
52	4 9 5	4 18 10	5 19 11	9 13 1	56 9 0	52
53	4 13 5	5 2 5	6 3 11	9 18 3	57 12 11	53
54	4 17 8	5 6 3	6 8 0	10 3 5	58 17 2	54
55	5 1 11	5 10 2	6 12 1	10 8 6	60 0 8	55

[The usual non-participating Rates differ little from these Premiums.]

* A person of 30 may secure £1000 at death, by a yearly payment, during life, of £20 : 15s.

This Premium would generally elsewhere secure £800 only, instead of £1000.

OK, he may secure £1000 by 21 yearly payments of £27 : 13 : 4—being thus free of payment after age 50.

† At age 40, the Premium ceasing at age 60 is, for £1000, £33 : 14 : 2,—about the same as most Offices require during the whole term of life. Before the Premiums have ceased, the Policy will have shared in at least one division of profits. To Professional Men and others, whose income is dependent on continuance of health, the limited payment system is specially recommended.

BRANCH OFFICES:

GLASGOW, 29 St. Vincent Pl.

BRISTOL, 31 Clare Street.

MANCHESTER, 10 Albert Sq.

ABERDEEN, 25 Union Street.

CARDIFF, 19 High Street.

NEWCASTLE, 3 Queen Street.

DUNDEE, 12 Victoria Chambers.

LEEDS, Royal Exchange.

NOTTINGHAM, 27 Victoria St.

BIRMINGHAM, 96 Colmore Row.

LIVERPOOL, 25 Castle Street.

BELFAST, 10 Donegall Sq., N.

DUBLIN . . . 16 COLLEGE GREEN.

LONDON OFFICE: 17 KING WILLIAM STREET, E.C.

Scottish Provident Institution

INSTITUTED 1837. INCORPORATED 1848.

IN THIS SOCIETY are combined the advantages of
Mutual Assurance with **Moderate Premiums**.

THE PREMIUMS are so moderate that an Assurance of £1200 or £1250 may generally be secured from the first for the yearly payment which usually would be charged (with profits) for £1000 only—equivalent to an immediate Bonus of 20 to 25 per cent.

The WHOLE PROFITS go to the Policyholders, on a system at once safe and equitable,—no share being given to those by whose early death there is a *loss*. Large additions have thus been, and will be, made to the policies of those who participate, notwithstanding the lowness of the premiums.

The SURPLUS at last Investigation (1887) was £1,051,035, which, after reserving one-third, was divided among 9384 Policies entitled to participate. Notwithstanding the lowness of the premiums, the additions to policies sharing for the first time (with a few unimportant exceptions) ranged from 18 to 34 per cent of the Sums Assured, according to age and class; and policies of £1000, which had shared before, were increased in all to £1500, £1600, £1800 and upwards.

Over 80 per cent of the amount of Claims paid last year was in respect of Policies which had participated in the Surplus—the Bonus Additions averaging almost 50 per cent of the original Assurances.

The Accumulated FUNDS are now close on 8 MILLIONS.

Arrangements as to SURRENDERS, NON-FORFEITURE, LOANS ON POLICIES, EARLY PAYMENT OF CLAIMS, FREE RESIDENCE, &c., are specially liberal.

REPORTS with full information may be had on application.

For Table of Premiums, by different modes of payment, see the other side.

LONDON OFFICE: 17 KING WILLIAM STREET, E.C.

HEAD OFFICE: No. 6 ST. ANDREW SQUARE, EDINBURGH.

Sep. 1892.

